

SOME ASPECTS OF PANDYAN HISTORY IN THE LIGHT OF RECENT DISCOVERIES

Sri S. Subramania Aiyar Endowment Lectures 1971-72

by

Dr K. V. RAMAN

*Deputy Superintending Archaeologist,
Archaeological Survey of India, Madras*



UNIVERSITY OF MADRAS

MADRAS-5

SOME ASPECTS OF PANDYAN HISTORY IN THE LIGHT OF RECENT DISCOVERIES

Sri S Subramania Ayyar Endowment Lectures 1971-72



by

Dr K V RAMAN

*Deputy Superintending Archaeologist,
Archaeological Survey of India, Madras*



UNIVERSITY OF MADRAS

MADRAS-5

© University of Madras, Madras 5

Price Rs 2 50

**LECTURES DELIVERED UNDER THE AUSPICES OF
SIR SUBRAMANIA AYYAR ENDOWMENT
MADRAS UNIVERSITY, 1972**

**SOME ASPECTS OF PANDYAN HISTORY IN THE LIGHT OF
RECENT DISCOVERIES**

Dr K. V RAMAN

INTRODUCTION

The Pandyas were one of the oldest royal lines to have ruled in the Tamil country. Probably, they have also the longest and most continuous history right from the Sangam period upto even the 16th century. The Cholas and the Cheras, though equally old, had long and intermittant breaks. For instance, the Chola dynasty after its initial glory during the Sangam Age, was out of the foot-lights of history during the 5th to 8th centuries and it had a revival only in the middle of the 9th century A D under the famous Vijayalaya. Again, after a spell of glorious rule for four centuries, they fell from power towards the end of the 13th century, after which almost nothing was heard about them.

But the Pandyas, except for the brief period of the Kalabhra interregnum, occupied the political stage continuously almost upto the modern times. Even while the Pandyan kingdom came under the control of the Cholas, the Pandyan rulers rose from time to time with the banner of revolt and succeeded in reviving it soon. Similarly, in the midst of adverse circumstances when Madurai was occupied by the Sultans in the beginning of the 14th century, the Pandyan rulers shifted their capital to Tenkasi and Tirunelveli and continued to rule till the 17th century. In short, theirs is a long record of an unbroken rule in Tamil Nadu, unique in the annals of any ruling dynasty of the world.

Yet, paradoxically, their history is perhaps the briefest that is available to us today. The pioneering work of the doyens of epigraphy and history like Venkayya and K. V. Subramania Aiyar, Hanthara

Anyar Kanakasabai Pillai, T. A. Copinatha Rao, L. D. Swamik
 Pillai, C. R. Krishnamachari and others did the spade work
 collected valuable information from epigraphy and literature.
 K. A. Nilakanta Sastri's celebrated work *The Pandya Kingdom*
 published in 1929 represents the best outcome of all the data that
 available at that time. It was indeed a challenging task to write
 connected history of the Pandyas especially because of the well known
 difficulties involved in the task such as the practice of adopting
 same names and titles alternately by the kings, co-regencies,
 peculiar method of dating adopted in their records etc. The history
 the Second Pandyan empire i.e. from the accession of Jatavarman
 Kulasekhara I (A.D. 1190) is very well documented. But for
 earlier history the records were limited in sharp contrast to the
 that were available for the Pallavas. Still, with the data available
 Prof. Sastri has given us a connected account for the period. But
 was in 1926 almost half a century ago! From then on several
 hundreds of inscriptions of the Pandyas have been reported which
 have given us new and additional material for writing the political and
 cultural history of the Pandyas. Thanks to the intensive excavation
 and coverage done by the Epigraphical Branch of the Archaeological
 Survey of India almost every temple in Pandya lands has been

District published recently by the Department of Archaeology, Government of Tamil Nadu. *South Indian Temple Inscriptions* — published by the late lamented Epigraphist, Shri T N Subramaniam gives the originals of several Pandyan inscriptions Dr K K. Pillay's "*Sucindram Temple*" and Sadasiva Pandarattar's *Pandiar Varalaru* give the contents of some unpublished Pandyan inscriptions The contributions of the epigraphists like the late A S Ramanatha Aiyar and Shri K. G Krishnan in the volumes of *Epigraphia Indica* give valuable information on the new inscriptions of the Pandyas.

The Temple Survey Project of the Archaeological Survey of India undertook a survey of all the rock-cut cave temples of the Pandyas and a full volume has been prepared by Shri K V Soundara Rajan with detailed drawings and photographs, awaiting publication.

The above facts are only selected examples to show how the evidences are growing on the subject and it will be worthwhile to take stock of the developments This is what I propose to do in these lectures I have gone through all the inscriptions that have come to light since 1929, both stone and copper-plate and have endeavoured to discuss the more important ones under appropriate heads This will help to highlight the importance of the evidences and draw the attention of scholars to undertake further work in the field I have also taken stock of the discoveries in the related fields — like numismatics, architecture and iconography.

I have divided my lectures under two headings — in the first lecture I will discuss the importance of recent discoveries relating to political and administrative aspects and in the second lecture, I propose to discuss the social, economic and cultural aspects

LECTURE 1

POLITICAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE ASPECTS

A POLITICAL

Among the recent discoveries relating to the earlier history of the Pandyas, I have to mention the valuable contributions made by Sri Iravatham Mahadevan in the reading of the Brahmi inscriptions which cluster round the Pandyan country His readings have enabled us to recover the hitherto unknown or less known names and

words. Several names of villages, towns, kings, chieftains and dynasties merchant classes have come to full light. We are able to identify the name of the celebrated Pandyan king Nedunjchelien in the two inscriptions found at Mangulam — perhaps the earliest epigraphical evidence on a Pandyan king. It mentions the gift of the cave by one Catikan, the brother in law (or Salakan) of Nedunjchelien. Another inscription records the gift to the same cave by Katalan Valuttayan, an officer of Nedunjchelien. The suffix *ralali* is a characteristic appellation of the Pandyas. Their donation to the Jain monasteries is noteworthy. The inscription at Pillaiyarpattil in Ramanathapuram Dt. mentions one Peru Paranan, the chieftain of Erukkattor. The Brahmi inscription recently discovered by me and my friend Y. Subbarayalu at Anttapatti very near Mangulam records the gift of a Pandyan chieftain by name Chajivan Adanan Velijan to a local Jain cave.¹

Besides the names of the kings and chieftains of Pandya Nadu, the early Brahmi inscriptions furnish us with valuable information regarding the state of Jainism in Pandya Nadu, the various towns and ports, the merchant classes and guilds etc., which I will discuss in a later context.

1. Two important discoveries relating to the Pandyan history are the inscriptions found at Malayadikkuruchchi in Tirunelveli district and the Vargai bed at Madurai in 1959 and 1961 respectively. Both apparently belong to one and the same king Maran Sendan.² The Malayadikkuruchchi inscription is in the mixed Tamil and Vatteluttu characters of the 7th century and it is dated 17th regnal year of Maran Sendan whose rule commenced probably in A. D. 623. This inscription which is found in the rock-cut cave temple is now the earliest among the Pandyan inscriptions so far available. It records the founding of the cave by one officer under the orders of the Pandyan king. This incidentally helps us to identify a well-dated Pandyan cave ascribable to the 7th century A. D. This point will be adverted to by me in a later context.

1. I. A. Raman and Y. Subbaraya: "A new Tamil inscription from Anttapatti" (1964) Dec. p. 22.

2. ARE 1959-60 p. 52.

The other inscription of Sendan was found accidentally in the bed of the Vaigai river at Madurai. I had the chance to notice this first. It was used by a washerman for washing the clothes. After seeing the early character of this I arranged to remove the stone to a safer place and advised the washerman not to misuse it. Later Shri K. G. Krishnan, Superintendent for Epigraphy, Govt of India, arranged to take estampages and report it in the official bulletin.³ The inscription both palaeographically and historically is a valuable record. The Sanskrit portion of the text is written in grantha and the Tamil portion in Vatteluttu characters. The verse form of the text anticipates the *Meykkiruthi* so popular in later times. The style of text is reminiscent of the later *manipravala* style.

The inscription is dated in the 50th regnal year of Sendan, who is identified with Seliyan Vanavan. Sendan, mentioned in the Velvikkudi grant. So far, only his name was known to us. Now, through this inscription we get to know many of his achievements, hitherto unknown to us. It states that Sendan performed many charitable deeds like the *Hiranyagarbha*, *Tulabhara* and other *maha-danas* founded the city of Mangalapura (where his grandson fought with the Maharathas) and constructed a sluice to the Vaigai river and named it as *Arikesariyan*, evidently after his successor and heir-apparent Arikesari. It may be remembered that the Velvikkudi grant also mentions Mangalapura as the place where Sendan's grandson Kochchadaiyan Ranadhiran fought with the Mahrathas or the Chalukyas. The identification of Mangalapura was eluding us. Now, according to the Vaigai bed inscription, it was founded by the Pandyan king Sendan and so the place can be with more justification identified with Mangalam, on the northern bank of Kollidam in Tiruchchirapalli district. The two Chalukyan invasions of the Tamil country took place in A. D. 634-35 and 674 which brought them so far as the Kaveri and it is quite likely that they wanted to capture Mangalapuram, which was founded by the Pandyan king Sendan.

Shri K. G. Krishnan identifies this king with Sendan mentioned in the *Muthollayiram* and also in the *payiram* of *Culamani*.⁴ The name of

3 ARE, 1961-62, p. 14-15

4 K. G. Krishnan, *Some Recent Discoveries in Pandyan History*, paper read in Pandyan Seminar, 1970

Arikesari son of Sendan is immortalised in the *Panditlo* or Sinna manur plates inform us that the village was known as Arikesari nallur

2 Tirupparankunram inscription of Varaguna I

Two important inscriptions with dates in Kali Era have been discovered at Tirupparankunram — one is in Sanskrit found on the lintel of the Durga shrine and the other in Tamil and Vatteluttu characters found on one of the pillars of the cave.⁵ Both of them in Kali 3874 in the 6th year of Maranjadayyan mention his military general Samantan Ganapathi who excavated the caveshrine for Sivai and a tank. His wife excavated the shrines for Durga and Jyesthadevi. The Kali date enables us to fix the date of the inscription as A D 773-74. This inscription becomes another important land mark in the chronology of the early Pandyan kings. This date being his 6th regnal year of Maranjadayyan (alias Varaguna I) the date of the commencement of his rule may be fixed without doubt as A D 767-768.

Samantan Ganapathi the founder of this cave is described as Pandi Amrita mangalavaraiyan and a mahasamantan of the king.

3 Perumpalli Inscription

An early Pandyan inscription discovered at Perumpalli in Dindigul Taluk in 1955 throws some new light on the history of the area.⁶ It is engraved in the characters of the 9th century. At the beginning it recounts the exploits of members belonging to four successive generations of a family who served the Pandyan kings. They are —

1) Pallivelan

2) His son Parantaka Pallivelan is stated to have completed the Idavai-campaign (*Idavai*)

3) His son Pulla Nakkan who served Maharaja Sadaiya Maran in the campaigns of Vilinjai Idavai and Tirukkudamukku. This king is obviously none other than Sri Maran Sri Vallabhan who was the famous hero of these campaigns.

5 K. G. Krishnamoorthy, *The Pandya Inscriptions from Tirupparankunram*, I, I XXXVI.

6 *Madras* 1955-56; E. I. XXXII p. 23.

4) His son Nakkan-Pullan, who rendered many services to Varaguna-Maharaha and a Simhala king is mentioned in this connection

This interesting record shows how dedicated was this family of heroes who successively served the ruling Pandyan kings. Thus, Nakkan Pullan served King Varaguna II, his predecessor Pulla Nakkan served Sri Maran Sri Vallabhan, the victor of Vilinjam, Idavai etc., his predecessor Parantaka Palli Velan served under Nedunjadaiya Parantaka.

4 *An Early Pandian hero-stone at Vilinjam*

An inscription on a stone pillar at Vilinjam and now kept in the Padmanabhapuram Museum bears an inscription of 8th century in Vatteluttu and records the death of a hero on the occasion of the capture of Vilinjam.⁷ The hero is stated to have discharged his debt (*Senjorrupperungadan*) by giving up his life for the sake of his master, whose identity is not known. The capture of Vilinjam is mentioned frequently as an important achievement of the Pandyan kings right from the days of Nedunjadaiyan Parantaka. This inscription may well belong to him or his successor Sri Maran Sri Vallabha.⁸

Another inscription from the same place dated 27th year of Maranjadaiyan records that when the Chera forces attacked Karai-kottai Tadam Perumtinai, a Ulvittu-Sevaka, a hero by name Ranakirti of Perumur laid down his life.

5 *Inscription of Srīmaran Sri Vallabhan (Acc A D 815)*

An inscription from Erukkangudi is dated 18th year of Nedumaran Sri Vallabha and who won victories in several battles like Kunnur and Singalam.⁹ The king honoured one Etti-Sattan with the title Iruppaikkudi-Kilavan. He came of the family of one poet who had the distinction of being seated on the stone slab (*Sangappalagai*) at Madurai. His various acts of benefaction including irrigation schemes etc., are listed. He was a generous administrator, alive to the needs of the country and the welfare of the people he governed. He constructed two Siva temples and a Jaina palli and excavated two irrigation

7 470 of 1958-59

8 471 of 1958-59

9 334 of 1929-30

tanks called *Tirumaran-eri* and *Tirumal-eri* to improve the water-supply in the usually arid tract of Ramanathapuram

Srimaran's surname was *Avaipasekharan*. Probably he issued the coin named *Avaipasekharan Gulageri*¹⁰

Srimaran Sri Vallabhan's inscription has been found at Sittanna vasal. It states that the village Arrur-Sendamaagalam in Tiruchendur taluk was known *Avaipasekharan Chaturvedimangalam* after Srimaran¹¹ Similarly Sri Vallabha Valanadu was evidently called after him.¹²

These are some of the facts recently known from inscriptions about Srimara Sri Vallabhan. But by far, the most valuable records of Pandyan history that have come to light in recent times are the two copper plate grants viz the Dalavaypuram plates of Vira Narayana and the Sivakasi plates of Vira Pandya.

6 *Dalavaypuram copper plate*

This was accidentally discovered in 1958 while digging the lands belonging to Dalavay family at Dalavaypuram near Kollipatti. The donor of this grant was Parantaka Vira Narayana son of Srimara Sri Vallabhan and younger brother of Varaguna II. This remarkable copper plate record has furnished very valuable and hitherto unknown details not only about the king who issued it but also about his predecessors. The Sanskrit portion of this grant was composed by one Tamilabharanan alias Pandi Marayan. Let me give the highlights of the copper plate grant one by one

(i) First about Kadungon the founder of the Pandyan empire it states that he granted the village of Tirumangalam to twelve Brahmins by a copper plate grant. Another similar grant by a king who obtained Siddhi (died) at his residence at Kaludur. These royal charters were lost and hence need for a fresh grant

10 ARF 1922-30 p. 73

11 *Nil* p. 74

12 *Nil* p. 75

13 ARF 1957-58 p. 36; *Pandya Samudaya* 17 5. Also in *Annals of the Archael. Society Journal*, 1957-58

(ii) Between Kadungon and Jatula Parantak, the charter describes the achievements of the kings such as the victories in the battles at Idaiyālai and Vembaikkudi. The battles of Kaiuvur and Ānūr, where Jatula Parantaka and his son Srimaran Sri Vallabhan successively defeated the Kadava are known to us for the first time.

(iii) Srimaran's father is mentioned as Jatula Parantaka. In the Sinnamanur bigger plate, he is mentioned as Varaguna. Therefore, we are able to know that they refer to one and the same person i.e., Jatula Parantaka was also called Varaguna. For us, he is Varaguna I.

(iv) For the first time, we are also informed that Srimaran Sri Vallabhan won a victory against the combined forces of his enemies at Kudandai or Kumbakonam. It was a formidable confederacy of several forces, the Cheras, the Cholas, the Kupakas, the Gangas, the Kalingas and the Mahadas. The Pandya king killed the son of Amaravallan at Kudandai.

(v) We get some important information about the next king Varaguna (II), the son and successor of Srimaran Sri Vallabhan and elder brother of Parantaka Vira Narayana, the donor of this grant. We are informed that the elder brother also continued to be the king when this grant was issued in the 45th regnal year of Vira Narayana. It clearly indicates that the brother had a joint rule at that time. The elder brother Varaguna is described as one steeped in his devotion to Siva. It appears that Varaguna was at that time only a king in name and the *de facto* ruler was Vira Narayana. Hence, the copper plate quotes the regnal year of the younger brother.

Some scholars identify this elder king with Varaguna, eulogised by Manikkavasaga in his *Tirukkoraivar* ¹⁴. The description of this king in this copper plate as the king "meditating on Siva" is taken as sufficient evidence to settle the date of Manikkavasagar as the contemporary of Varaguna II i.e., the later part of the 9th century A.D. Though this is not improbable, there seem to be certain other difficulties in giving such an early date to Manikkavasagar, who on the grounds of internal evidence and other evidences from Saivite literature, is relegated to a later date.

14 Pandiar Seppedugal, in n. Contra B. G. L. Swami's paper in J. I. H., No. 148

(vi) This copper plate for the first time gives some interesting information about the geneology of Vira Narayana on his mother's side. We are surprised to know that his mother (i.e. Srmaran Sri Vallabhan's wife) was the daughter of Sri-kanta Chola of Pottappi line in charge of the Tondaimadu the homeland of the contemporary Pallavas. Sri-kanta is described as a Maharaja Tondaiyar kon Mayilaiyar kon. Who was this Sri-kanta and how he could be described as the lord of Tondaimandalam when the Pallavas were ruling over it, are problems which await satisfactory answer. It is possible to identify him with the Telugu Choda king of that name known to us from the Madras Museum Plates. He ruled in the 9th century and the Telugu Chodas belonged to the Pottappi line.

One important point brought out by this is that the Pandyas had matrimonial relations with the Telugu Chodas, probably because of their common rivalry with the Pallavas. Hence, the eulogy of Sri-kanta as the lord of Tondaimandalam in the Pandyan copper plate cannot be taken at its face value. Because of their rivalry with the Pallavas the Pandyas would not recognise the position of the Pallavas and on the other hand would praise the Telugu Cholas. Anyway this aspect needs further consideration.

(vii) The Dalavaypuram copper plates are also important for their account of Viranarayana's exploits which are known to us for the first time. The first victory is stated to be the one gained by him over his elder brother in the battle of Sennilam. Who this brother was is not known now. He won victories at Kunrai Pokkarani in West Kongu Ten mayal Venbai Parantakam etc. He captured Ten Vilinja navar. He destroyed the Kongan at Tenur. He subjugated one Vira Tunga whose identity is not clear. He built numerous temples. He assumed many colourful titles like *Kalippagas* and *Kandaul la alar* (hero among heroes).

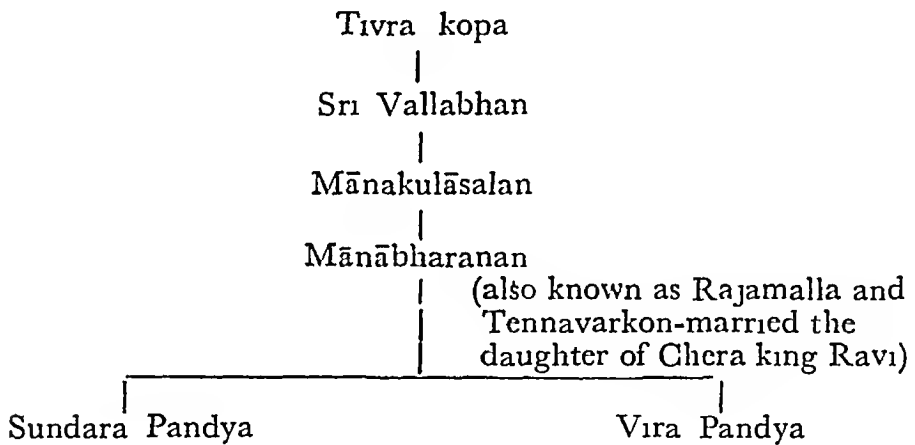
(viii) The copper plate gives some useful information about the village officers, procedure for creating Brahmadrya etc. It is stated that two copper plates granted by Kadunron earlier were lost during confusion and consequently the lands were made *Kadunron* i.e. lost to the ryots. But now the two villages (*Kumava*) Kuruchu and Tiruman-galam) were joined and made as one Brahmadrya. This was done on

the suggestion of Narayanan Kesavan, the Padikkaval of the village and a trusted officer of the king.

7 *Sivakasi plates of Vira Pandya*

Let me now pass on to the other important copper plate, the Sivakasi Plates discovered in 1960. This was issued by Vira Pandya on the occasion of his Brahmadeya gift of a village to a Brahmin Pitambaran in appreciation of his composition of a Sanskrit Prasasti. This was issued in the 3rd year of Vira Pandya (Acc. A. D. 947), while he was camping at the village of Sellur also called Virapandiyapuram.

This copper plate is also of great importance to us as it gives useful and hitherto unknown details on many aspects of Pandyan geneology and history. It introduces new names and relationships. For example, it gives the following geneology



For the first time, we come across the names Tivra-kopa and Mānakulāsalan as the Pandyan kings. It completely omits the names of such celebrated kings like Nedunjadaiyan Parantaka, the father of Srīmaran Sri Vallabhan and also the latter's two famous sons, Varaguna II and Parantaka Vira Narayana. The only explanation is that Sri Vallabhan and his father Tivra-kopa are probably identical with Sri Maran Sri Vallabhan and his father Nedunjadaya Parantaka (Varaguna I). Tivra-kopa is apparently another name for the latter. If we have to go by the known geneology of the Pandyas, we have to equate Manakulachala and his son Manabharana with Parantaka Vira Narayana and his son Rajasimha respectively. Even this would omit Varaguna II. This is the one only plausible way of explaining these sets of geneology. But, there is some room for suspecting that the geneology of Sivakasi plate

Vira Pandya, the donor of this grant, is described as the son of a Kerala princess (and daughter of the Chera king Ravi). He had, his coronation performed at *Tamallūdai* i.e., Madurai. His minister was Uttaramantri Dramila-maharajin or Tamil-pērarivar, who acted as the executor of the grant. It is interesting to learn that the Pandyan king had an adviser on dharma named *Dharmapadeshta*. Another officer mentioned as the leader of the elephant corps *Gajadhyaisthalara* or *Anai-Oluṭṭar*.

B. Some Chera records in Pandya country :

Recently, a few inscriptions of Chera kings dated to 9th century have been discovered in Kurnur near Palani, and Coimbatore district. In 1961, an epigraph of one Iravi-Kandan was found in the local Vagiswaraswami temple dated in his own 2nd regnal year¹⁸. Two more were found at Ponnivadi in Dharapuram taluk in Coimbatore district—one Vatteluttu and another in Tamil characters, both datable to the beginning of the 9th century. They belong to Kandan-Iravi who is stated to have belonged to the Chandraditya-line and bore the title Sarvabhauma¹⁹. At Perur, fragmentary inscriptions mentioning Kandan-Ravi and Ravi-Kandan of the same family are available²⁰. At Vellalur in the same district is available a record of 2nd year of Iravi-Kandan.²¹

They seem to belong to the Chera line which ruled over the Kongu country in the 9th century and who seem to have made incursions into the borders of Pandya nadu. The conquest of Kongu made by the Pandya kings like Nedunjadaiyan Parantaka and Srimaran Sri Vallabhan and others should have been against these Kongu-Cheras. A Chera prince of this line was a contemporary and subordinate to Chola Parantaka I and called himself Vira-Chola and with his permission issued the Namakkal copper plate grant in which the full genealogy of the line is given. The Cheraman Sthanu Ravi figuring in the inscription of Aditya I must have been a later member of this family.²²

18 Indian Archaeology, 1964-65, p. 57

19 ARE, 1961-62, pt II

20 S I I V, No. 223

21 148 of 1910

22 ARE 1961-62, p. 11

9 *Varaguna II* (Acc. A D 862)

Several important inscriptions of Varaguna II have come to light in the recent years from different parts of Pandya nadu and also the Chola country. The information furnished by the Dalavaypuram plates has already been given. We will now review the various stone-inscriptions issued in his reign.

Lalgudi record An important inscription found at Lalgudi in Tiruchirappur district of Maranjadaiyan alias Varaguna Maharaja records a gift made by the Pallava king Tellarerinda Nandippottaraiyan who was none else than the famous Nandivarman III (851-73 A. D.). This would clearly clinch their contemporaneity.²³

Thanjavur district Varaguna's inscriptions found in the heart of the Chola country clearly prove an interruption in the Pallava supremacy over the tract. About five of his records are available at Tirukkodikkaval and Tiruchchatturai in Thanjavur district. His 11th year record registers a gift of gold by the king for burning lamps in the shrines of Sri Sarasvati and Ganapati at Tirukkodikkaval.²⁴ At Tiruchchatturai the king gave 300 *kasu* as endowment.²⁵ His inscriptions dated 10th and 11th year have been found at Tirukattupalli and Niyamam in Thanjavur district. They mention Videlvidugu Muttaraiyan who was a feudatory of Pallava Nripatunga Varman.²⁶ Another inscription at Tirugokarnam dated 17th year of Maranjadaiyan mentions a donor by name Varagunavadirayan.²⁷ All these would prove that the Pandyas under Varaguna II succeeded in wresting the Thanjavur and Tiruchirappur regions from the hands of the Pallavas. We already know how Varaguna II and his brother Vira Narayanan fought successful battles at Kumbakonam, Venbil Idavai, etc. all of which lie in Thanjavur district.

But this Pandyan incursions did not go unchallenged. Nripatunga made a bold bid to recapture his possessions. His records appeared in the region soon. His Tirovadi record would show that Varaguna II

²³ ARE 1923-29 p. 66

²⁴ 3 of 1930-31

²⁵ 160 of 1930-31

²⁶ ARE, 1926-61 p. 70

²⁷ 311 of 1931

a subordinate position under him. The Pallavas allied themselves with the Western Gangas and inflicted a crushing blow to the Pandyan forces of Varaguna in the battle of Sripurambiam

Some more of Varaguna's records have come to light from the Pandyan country from the districts of Tirunelveli and Ramanathapuram. For example, there is one at Dalapati Samudram in Tirunelveli district dated in the 41st year of Maran Sadiyan (Varaguna) ²⁸. At Eruvadi nearby, his inscription dated 43rd regnal year is also known to us ²⁹.

10 *Parantaka Vira Narayana and Rajasimha*

The inscription of these two kings, father and son, have been found. The records of the former continued to be rare. The copper plate issued by Vira Narayana has been discussed in detail. Besides that, we get a few stray records of his in the Srivaikuntam taluk which are not however very informative. One of them, mentions a number of temple functionaries. They are all Vatteluttu records.³⁰ An inscription in grantha character on the sluice of a tank at Nilaiyur in Madurai district calls it as *Sri-Vira-Narayan*, evidently called after Vira Narayana ³¹.

The exact year of the commencement of his rule is not known. But, the Dalavaypuram plate was issued in his 45th regnal year. Prof Sastri tentatively gave A D 880 i.e., after the battle of Sripurambiam. On Varaguna's defeat, he came to power and, if calculation is made on that basis, 45th year would be A D 925 which is impossible. Evidently, his reign ran concurrently with his brother's perhaps starting a little later, and might well have been over by A D 900 when Rajasimha succeeded him.

Rajasimha The inscription of Vira Narayana's son Rajasimha are surprisingly many. It was during his reign that Parantaka Chola invaded Madurai as a result of which Rajasimha had to flee from his capital and seek refuge in Ceylon and lead a fugitive's life in the Chera

28 ARE 1928-29, p 66-67

29 605 of 1915

30 ARE 1931-32 p 68

31 ARE 1929-30 p 74-75

kingdom. However quite a few records giving his regnal year upto even 24th have been found in Pandya nadu. There is one dated inscription in the 3rd regnal year found on the door jamb of the Vishnu shrine at Attur³². It records a gift for the Tirunarayana Vinnagar by his chief or officer by name Vikkiramakamukha — Pallavarayan of Kulattur. Another Vatteluttu record of his at Kottainangulam informs that the temple was known as *Rajasimheswarar* — called after Rajasimha III (Sadaiyan maran)³³. Rajasimha's inscription dated in his 9th regnal year are found in Vishnu temple at Sinnamanur. Kurralanatha temple at Kuttalam. 10 year at Tenur. 11th and 13th year at Ambasamudram. 14th year at Solavandan. 17th year again at Kuttalam. 19th year at Nanguneri. 20th year at Tiruppudaimarudur and Uttamapalayam. 21st year at Kovikulam and Sevilipperi. 24th year at Perungulam near Srivaikuntam etc.³⁴. If his accession is taken as 900 A.D. his 24th year would be A.D. 924 when perhaps the Cholas led by parantaka displaced him and forced him to flee to Kerala, the home of his mother Vānavanmahadevi.

11 *Solan-talal konda Vira Pandya (946—966)*

We have already seen in detail the valuable data furnished by the Sivakasi copper plate issued by this king. We will briefly review the information contained in his stone inscriptions discovered in recent years. During his time the Pandyas made a recovery and recaptured Madurai from the Cholas who were at that time engaged with the Rashtrakuta invasion of Chola country. More than 15 inscriptions of his are available now. There are three of his inscriptions found recently on the door jambs of the Airavatesvara temple at Anaiyur near Madurai. One of them dated in his 10th year states that the king made certain offerings to the deity by whose grace he obtained the kingdom³⁵. It is also mentioned that the king issued this order from his seat named *Vira Peralar* in the palace called *Manikkhara arayan* in Mangalapuram. The name *Vira Peralar* might have been given to the seat because Vira Pandya's mother was a Chera princess and the

32 S.I. 1011

33 S.I. 1011 25

34 S.I. 1011 47 to 77

35 ARE 1 + 16, pp. 16-17

name *Manabharana-tirumaligai* might be after Vira Pandya's father Manabharana

From the Anaiyur inscriptions, we also learn of his officers such as Murkha-Vichchadira-Pallavaraiyar *alias* Sattan Tamilan, who figures as the donor His 4th year record at Pallimadam in Ramanathapuram district mentions that the temple was called Sundara-Pandya-Isvara, evidently called after his brother Sundara Pandya for whom the temple was built as a memorial or *Pallippadai*³⁶. The village is called Pallippadai This corroborates the evidence given by Sivakasi plates

An officer donor of this grant was Solantaka Pallavaraiyar. From another record we know Kuruvitturai was named a Solantaka-Chaturvedimangalam

His 5th year record from Kilmathur, Madurai, refers to the erection of a stone lintel named Srikanthesvaram by an officer Tennavan Kandan-Sattan A flower garden was also endowed and it was called "Solantakan" after the title of the ruler The officer examined the affairs of the temple and issued certain regulations, regarding the lands belonging to the temple priests (*aganaligaiyars*), drummers (*Uvachchars*) etc³⁷ Another record dated 8th year in the same temple contains an eulogy of the chieftain whose full name was Tennavan-Tamilvel³⁸ His 15th year record at Perungulam mentions an officer by name Pandimarttanda-Pallavaraiyan In an inscription of Rajasimha himself the name Pandimarttanda-valandu occurs and as if it might have been a title of Rajasimha Manavira Valanadu is mentioned as a part of Tiruvaludi-valandu. Manavira might have been a title assumed by a king earlier than Vira Pandya³⁹ His 20th year record has been found in the Erichchavudaiyar temple at Ambasamudram It mentions certain officers like Vikrama-Pandya-Muvendavelan, Cholantaka-Brahmarayan, Tamilvel etc It mentions a gift to Acharyan Manabharanan Sendan who built this stone-temple⁴⁰

36 S I I XIV, No 79

37 *Ibid*, No 84 and 85

38 *Ibid*, No 87

39 93

40 *Ibid*, No 94

Incidentally, the astronomical data given in the record enables us to fix the date of Vira Pandya's accession more or less exactly as between A. D. 946 and 947. A record of Vira Pandya dated in his 20th year at Salaigramam in Ramanathapuram district informs us that the king was camping at Tiruppalaiyur.⁴¹ *Tennavan-Tamilrai*, an officer of the king is eulogised for his scholarship in Sanskrit and Tamil. He is described as a minister well versed in the *Iedas*, *Vedangas*, law, puranas and *muttamul* (the three branches of Tamil learning) *Palanjalam*. He was a native of Kanchi.

Chola Occupation

In A. D. 962, Vira Pandya suffered a defeat at Sevvur at the hands of Sundara Chola (the father of Rajaraja I) who assumed the title *Madurai-Ionda-Rajakesarivarman*. But again Vira Pandya's records are found in Pandyanadu not later than his 20th regnal year i.e. A.D. 966. During this year he was defeated and killed by Aditya Chola who assumed the title *Vira Pandyan talai-Ionda Ke-Paralesan* in the second year of his reign. From then on commenced the regular and continuous rule of the Cholas over the Pandyan country. Though the Pandyas rose in revolt frequently against the Chola overlordship, the Chola conquest of Pandimandala became complete during the time of Rajaraja I who assumed the title *Pandya Kulasan*. Pandyanadu was named as *Pajaraja-mandalam*. Inscriptions brought to light in recent years show how systematic the process of Cholanation of Pandyan country took place from street and village name to that of the temples and the province. This will be dealt with in a later context. During the period of Chola occupation they appointed their close family members as viceroys to be in charge of the Pandyan country and called them as Chola Pandyas. The first among them was Jatavarman Sundara Chola Pandya, the son of Rajendra I. Next we hear of three more viceroys — Maravarman Vikrama Chola Pandya, Jatavarman Chola Pandya and Maravarman Parakramachola Pandya. This was the system by which the Cholas wanted to keep their imperial hold on Pandyan territory. They kept Chola regiments at several places like Anaiyur in Madurai taluk, Sermadevi in Tirunelveli dist. By annihilating the Pandyan names and titles they wanted to wipe out all memories of

the Pandyas and step into their shoes. But this did not succeed for long. The Pandyas never reconciled themselves to the Chola occupation and we find several members of the line rising from time to time to displace the Cholas and re-establish the Pandyan rule. Quite a few records giving interesting information about them have come to light. A copper plate issued by Jatavarman Sundara Chola Pandya was discovered at Pandavarmangalam in Koilpattī taluk in 1958.⁴² It is dated in his 10th year. It is highly corroded. It calls Pandavarmangalam as Panchavanmadevi-Chaturvedimangalam. This is the only copper plate charter of the Chola-Pandya viceroys. I shall refer to certain new data about Chola-Pandya viceroys also here.

1 Jatavarman Sundara Chola Pandya

Mannarkoil was called Rajaraja-Chaturvedimangalam and the temple therein was called Rajendrasola-Vinnagar.⁴³ Sermadevi was called Nīgaralīsola-Chaturvedimangalam and the temple therein called *Cholendrasimhesvaram*.⁴⁴ Perungulam in Tirunelveli dt. was called Uttamasolanallur.⁴⁵ At Arrur-Perungulam evidently a Chola regiment was stationed. A soldier belonging to the regiment which was called *Sundara-Solapandyatterinde-palai yeral* gave a donation to the local temple. Three of his records have recently been found at Anaiyur near Madurai dated in his 5th, 9th and 13th year. One of them mentions the existence of Padaitalaivar or heads of regiments — as the authority over the affairs of the temple.⁴⁶

Two Chera feudatories of the Chola emperor are mentioned. Cheramanar Rajasingar built the shrine of Rajendra Sola Vinnagar at Mannarkoil in about A.D. 1033-34. He figures in many other inscriptions too.⁴⁷ Another Chera feudatory by name Cheramanar Rajarajdeva figures in the inscription of Mar Vikramasola Pandya.⁴⁸

42 ARE, 1958-59, P 16

43 S I I XIV No 144

44 *Ibid*, No 137

45 *Ibid*, No 131

46 Indian Archaeology, 1961-62, p 82

47 No 170 (S I I XIV)

48 *Ibid*, 144, 150, 154, 193 etc.

2 Maravarman Vikrama Chola Pandya

The next Chola Pandya viceroy was Vikrama Chola Pandya, whose 20th regnal year is the earliest date that is available. Why earlier records of his are not available is not clear. It is quite likely that he was a co-regent of his predecessor for nearly 20 years and that he actually governed the Pandyan viceroyalty in his own name for the last five years (20th to 25th year). His records have been found only in the district of Tirunelveli and not elsewhere. Attur is stated to have been a part of Rajadhiraja Chaturvedimangalam⁴⁰. Rajadhiraja was the Chola ruler at that time. A captain or *dandanayaka* of a regiment of a battalion by name Parakrama Narayana is mentioned as a donor in a record from Sermadevi⁴¹. The circumambulatory of the Sermadevi temple was called *Rajadhirajar-Tiruchurralai*. His records dated in his 25th regnal year are found at Attur, Tirunelveli district. Why his epigraphs are absent in Madurai and Ramanathapuram districts is not known.

3 Jatavarman Chola Pandya

The next viceroy was the son of the Chola king Virarajendra. He was conferred the title of Chola Pandya and sent as viceroy. His records are only few and they too are to be found in Tirunelveli district. His 24th and 25th year records come from Sucindram⁴². His exact reign period is still not clear. A record of his 3rd year from Sermadevi informs us that he was seated in the palace at Rajendra solapuram. There is also a mention that he received certain order from the Chola king *nam aryar* directing him to exempt certain lands from taxation⁴³. This would show the firm control by the central authority.

4 Maravarman Parakrama Chola Pandya

The last Chola Pandya viceroy was Parakrama Chola Pandya who styled himself Maravarman. The only two records of his known to us were found as early as 1916. Nothing has been added to this later. They are also found only in Tirunelveli district. One of them

40 187

41 III 127

51 S.I.I XIV p. v

42 124

mentions the benefaction made by some natives of Kashmiradesam and Aryadesam who probably came on pilgrimage or settled down there ⁵³

Recovery of the Pandyas

Jatavarman Sri Vallabha (Acc A. D. 1120-22)

The appointment of Chola-Pandya viceroys was probably discontinued during the time of Kulottunga I during whose reign the five Pandyan princes made combined bid to extricate the Pandyan kingdom from the Chola yoke. Kulottunga claims to have put them to flight and placed the garrisons in strategically important centres of the dominions. But inscriptions issued by the Pandyan kings begin to appear in certain parts where they had regained control. One such important Pandyan prince, probably one of the 'Five Pandyas' referred to above, was Jatavarman Sri Vallabha, whose inscriptions ranging from 2nd to 26th year have been found in large numbers in certain parts of Tirunelveli and Ramanathapuram district. Nearly 70 of his records have been collected by A. S. Ramanatha Iyer and the same published in S. I. I. Vol 14. His *prasasti* began with the words *Tirumadandaiyum Jayamadandaiyum*. From a recently discovered record from Ambasamudram, we learn that he used another also viz, *Pumadu Punara* ⁵⁴. His contemporaneity with Kulottunga I is indicated by an inscription of Vijayamangalam. Another record gives useful astronomical data on the basis of which K. G. Krishnan fixes his date of accession between A. D. 1120-1122, ⁵⁵. We get many useful details about him and his reign. A recently discovered record at Anaiyur informs us that he performed the coronation at *Vandamulkkudal (Madurai)* ⁵⁶. His queen Ulagamulududaiyal patronised a *matha* ⁵⁷. His son Pillaiyar Sundara-Pandyadeva camped at Solapuram, in Koilpatti taluk, heard the representation made by the Sabha and made a gift of land to the local temple. The temple was called *Sundarapandya-vinnagar* and the village

53 S. I. I. XIV, Nos 196-197,

54 ARE 1962-63, p 31

55 *Ibid*, p vi

56 ARE 1962-63, p 31

57 S. I. I. XIV, 200 and 248

She constructed the kitchen at Tiruppattur temple

punara. His 23rd year record at Vikramamangalam quotes the 40th year of Kulottunga I.⁶⁸ We have already referred to several indirect references to him in the records of Sri Vallabha. For example 11th year record (A D 1131) mentions a channel called *Parakramopandiapperaru* ⁶⁹

Jatavarman Parantaka .

He lived in the latter part of Kulottunga I's reign. His prasasti beginning with "Tiruvalara Jayamvalara . . ." claims several spectacular victories like defeating the Chera king, conquest of south Kalinga country under Telunga-Bluma, marriage with Kupaka princess (S. Travancore). All these, as Prof Sastri, rightly points out, were done while assisting the Chola king Kulottunga. A record of Sri Vallabha calls Karungulam near Tenkasi as Telingakulakala-chaturvedimangalam and it may be a reference to this episode ⁷⁰. A territorial division called *Parantaka-Valanadu* as well as *Sri Vallabha Valanadu* are mentioned

Maravarman Sri Vallabhan (Acc A. D 1132-33)

His prasasti was *Poomagal Jayamagal*. He probably ruled upto A D. 1182. His inscriptions are found in Tirunelveli district.⁷¹ A record dated in his 31st year refers to his order issued from the office room (*eluthumandapam*) at Varatungadevanallur for instituting a service called Ahavarman-Sandhu on the day of his natal star which was Purattasi. This record has the prasasti beginning with *Jayamadandayum* ⁷²

Jatavarman Kulasekhara (Acc 1162 A D to 1173)

Son of Sri Vallabha. Prasasti *Puthalamadandai*. Like his father, he was ruling with Tirunelveli as the Capital while his brother Parakrama Pandya was ruling over the northern part from Madurai. He started the first Pandyan Civil war. Kulasekhara sacked Madurai. Parakrama Pandya appealed to Singalam for help. Before help could come to him he was killed and Madurai captured. The Ceylon troops marched forward and succeeded in displacing Kulasekhara and restoring the

68 ARE 1909, p 29, ARE 1910, p 32

69 318 of 1908

70 *Ibid*, XXV, p 84

71 *Ibid*, XXV, p 84

72 243 of 1939-40, His second year record states that he was seated in his throne *Munayadarayan* at Tirunelveli (271 of 1927-28)

Madurai throne to Vira Pandya the son of the dead king Parakrama. Many details of his reign are already well known from different sources including the *Mahavamsa*. Ultimately, Kulasekhara sought the help of the Cholas to drive out the Ceylonese forces and recaptured Madurai. Chola king Rajadhiraja II entrusted Madurai with Kulasekhara. But the Chola king Kulottunga III inflicted a crushing blow on the Singalese army and put Vikrama Pandya firmly on the throne. Vira Pandya was defeated. It is said that Kulottunga placed his foot on Vira Pandya's head and dismissed him (அவன் முடிமேல் அடிவைத்து). Then Vira Pandya took refuge in Travancore. Thus ended the first war of Pandyan succession thanks to the Chola intervention. But ironically this was the last occasion of Chola intervention for after Kulottunga III, the Chola kingdom was itself ruled by weak monarchs and it was slowly cut asunder by feudatories who led to its downfall.

Jatavarman Parakrama Pandya

Though much is known about Kulasekhara, almost nothing was known about his contemporary rival Parakrama Pandya. More recently two of his inscriptions have been found at Devadanam in Ramanathapuram district.⁷³ It refers to the fact that original priests of the local temple failed to attend to their duties even after repeated calls and the king during his camp there, appointed a new man for the duty, by name Mudivalangum Pandya Brahmadirayan alias Surya Bhattar. This incident may indicate the general disorder or confusion prevailing in the land.⁷⁴ The king also arranged for the renovation of the temple. In the same time, there is also a record of Maravarman Sri Vallabha (Acc. 1133 A.D.) One person Nemeli Udaiyan has attested both the records. Sri Vallabha's record refers to even a Parakrama Sanda. This would show that Parakrama was a contemporary and even co-regent of Sri Vallabha. Apart from this no other new record or additional information about him is available. His year of accession and under what circumstances he came to rule over the northern part of Pandyanadu etc., are still a mystery. It is however likely as Prof Sastri has surmised he would have been at first loyal to the Cholas.

73 ARE, 1939-40 p. 241

74 We get a similar case at Tirupattur where worship in the temple was stopped when the Simalase army under Lanlapura Dandanayaka occupied it.

Jatāvarman Vira Pandya

Son of Parakrama Pandya and a rival of Jatavaraman Kulasekhara I, made several attempts to dislodge Kulasekhara with the help of Singhalese forces but forced to run away to Trivandrum

Jatāvarman Vikrama Pandya (Acc 1180)

He was the son and successor of Jatavarman Kulasekhara After ousting Vira Pandya, the Chola king Kulottunga III put him firmly on the Pandyan throne at Madurai in A. D. 1180 He ruled upto A. D. 1190 He was throughout loyal to the Chola king, Kulottunga III and his reign which lasted upto A. D. 1190 was peaceful A new record of Vikrama Pandya found at Kattarimangalam in Tiruchendur taluk states that the village was renamed as Vikrama Pandya—Chaturvedimangalam and 64 learned Brahmans well-versed in the *vedas* and *sastras* were settled down there ⁷⁵ This would show the peaceful times returning, after all the turmoil of civil war

Second Pandyan Empire

From now on, the Pandyan kingdom recovered rapidly much of the power and glory that characterised it before the sack of Madurai by Parantaka Vikrama Pandya was friendly and loyal to his benefactor Kulottunga III But with the coming in of his successor Jatavarman Kulasekhara (Acc A. D. 1190) Chola-Pandya relations underwent complete change “From this time on, almost to end of the 13th century (for about 200 years), the power of the Pandyas attained great strength and expanded as far north as Nellore and Cuddappah, a succession of able and truly distinguished rulers in the main line made the Second Pandyan Empire a real power in the politics of South India in their age Their successes in war, their patronage of literature and arts and the methods of their rule are amply borne out by numerous records they have left behind”⁷⁶ This period of Pandyan ascendancy is already well documented Not only the records of Pandyas but also numerous records of their contemporaries like the Cholas, Hoysalas, Telugu Chodas, Kādavaryars, Sambhuvarayas, Kakatiyas give us a full picture of the times, hardly leaving any major gap to be filled

75 377 of 1929-30

76 K. A. N. Sastri *The Pandyan Kingdom*, p. 139

There is no need to dwell on it in detail. I shall only draw attention to any piece of interesting information that has come to light in recent years

Jatavarman Kulasekara I Acc 1190

He was the first great ruler whose rule extended over the districts of Madurai, Ramanathapuram and Tirunelveli. A record from Tiruppattur makes prominent mention of his officers Kadon Aludiyar *alias* Kalavayil Nadalvan and Mummudi Solan Malavar Chakravarti.⁷⁷ The former was probably in charge of the regions around Tirumayyam and Tiruppattur. The name Malavar or Malavachakaravarti is interesting and it seems to have been the surname adopted by the chiefs of Sembonmar who figure in the Singhalese invasion of Paodyanadu. The Singhalese general Lankapura Daodanayaka is said to have captured the fortress of Semboonari and later on gave it back to Malava Chakravarti.⁷⁸ It may be mentioned in this connection that the throne of Kulasekhara was known as *Malavarayan*. It appears to me that this was contributed or gifted to the king by the Malavarayans.

An inscription of his 3rd year from Sermadevi found in 1964 mentions a gift by the Chera prince Kodai Iravivarman, the brother-in-law (Machunar) of the Paodyan king.⁷⁹ Some of his inscriptions are now available from Alagarkoil one of which informs us that his queen was Dharanimuludaiyal. She established the flower garden near the spring on the top of Alagar hill.⁸⁰ The king's machchunavar (brother-in-law) by name Viradamuditta Perumal built a Vishnu temple at Settur in Ramanathapuram district. It was named Serankarayan-vinnagar.⁸¹ Is this brother-in-law same as Kodai Ravi the Chera king? Alagaperumal is also mentioned as the king's brother-in-law.

A record of Tirupparankunram informs us that there was a hall called *Kulasekhara Narasinga Mandapa* built by Narasinga, an officer under Kulasekharan. A record of Maraa Sundara Pandyan refers to Kulasekhara as *Periandiyasar* i.e. elder brother.

77 167 187 and 188 of 1935-36

78 ARE, 1935-36 pp. 78, 79

79 Indian Archaeology 1961-63 p. 57

80 300 of 1929-30.

81 ARE 1933-40 p. 45

From a record of 13th year from Vembattu and other similar records elsewhere, we understand that land-measurements were revised and fresh assessments made at the instance of Kalavali-nādalvan by the king ⁸² A new measuring standard called *Kuditangi* which is 1/4 longer than the older one was introduced and the lands were surveyed by this new standard ⁸³ The king instituted an endowment for offering to God Kalapiran during the *Kulasckharan-Sandi* ⁸⁴ A record of Kulasekhara dated Ś 1134 = A D 1212 mentions an officer by name Manābharana Muvendavelan of Kappalur who excavated a chanel called *Tyaganchuriya-peraru* from the Vaigai ⁸⁵

Māraarman Sundara I (Acc A D 1215)

He was a brother of Kulasekhara, who is called *Periyanāyanar*. Many officers like Kalavayil Nadalvan and Malava Chakravarti served both the brothers. Already we know much about his brilliant conquests and other achievements which laid the foundation of the Pandyan hegemony. He turned the tables on the Cholas. He carried fire and sword into the heart of the Chola country, captured the capital (Mudikondacholapuram) and even performed the *Virabhishcha* at Ayirattali. He fully deserved the titles *Sonadu londa*, and *Sonadukonda-mudikonda-solapurathu-virar*. Since he had the good sense to give back the kingdom to the weak Chola, Rajaraja III, he called himself *Sonaduvallangiaruliya*. His records also showed the part played by the Hoysalas on behalf of the tottering Chola kingdom. Vira Narsimha, the Hoysala, even invaded the Pandyan country to prevent the Pandyan incursions. A record of Sundara Pandya (22nd year - A D. 1239) from Tiruppattur mentions certain individuals who took advantage of the Hoysala intervention and tried to create disorder by breaking into the temple treasury. They were later captured and punished ⁸⁶ Another record datable to A D 1236 refers to the collection of a special cess from the residents of Ilaiyangudi to be paid to the Hoysala general Mahapradhanu Bhogadandanāyaka for immunity against his

82 *Ibid*, p 245

83 323 and 329 of 1959-60

84 341 of 1959-60

85 333 of 1961-62

86 170 of 1935-36

plundering raids.⁸⁷ It is probable that it was due to this Hoysala intervention that the Sundara returned the Chola kingdom to the Cholas.

His throne named *Malavarayan* at Madurai is mentioned. At the request of Malavarayar, he remitted taxes for the Suodarapaodyan Sandi for the Varagunivaram temple at Salaugramam in Ramanathapuram district.⁸⁸ A record from the Vishnu temple at Tenturupperai records the construction of a mandapa *Jnanasamudra-mandapa* in the name of the king. From this, we know that it was another title for the king. It refers to the setting up of the image of Bhomiparattiyar in the village which was called Sundara Pandya Chaturvedimangalam.⁸⁹ Sundaramurti and Paravainachiar were also installed in the Siva temple in same village.⁹⁰ A record from Tiruchi mentions Tirubhuvanamādevi-nallur and it may suggest his queen's name.⁹¹ A record from Tiruppattur gives a long list of the various officers in different regions of Pandyanadu under Sundara. Among them is mentioned Alagapperumal styled as the king's brother in law.⁹² Since he also figures as brother-in-law of Jotavarman Kulasekhara, this provides another proof to suggest that the latter and Maran Sundara were brothers. The other officers mentioned are

- 1 Gāngeyan.
- 2 Aiyar Malavarayan
- 3 Nartongarayan the chief of Niyamam in Adalattur
- 4 Kōdai kandan alias Kuralayattaraiyar
- 5 Adigaman of Tiruppuranam
- 6 Serrudaiyan
- 7 Alagapperumal (brother in law)

87 291 of 1949-50.

88 313 of 1948-49

89 284 of 1940-41

90 248

91 323 of 1955-56.

92 176 187 of 1935-36.

- 8 Mantiri Raman *alias* Pallavarayan of Perumanallur in Anda-nadu
- 9 Nilag ingarayan of Sembinadu
- 10 Kulasekhara Uttaramantiri.
- 11 Mānabharana Muvendavelan of Kappalur.

Maravarman Sundara II

He had a short reign. During his period, the Hoysala influence increased and with its consequent confusion⁹³ His inscription dated 14th year at Nanguneri mentions a battalion called *Iranasingamran tirinda rilligal*.⁹⁴ His records mention the following officer Aiyar Malavarayan and Annan Tamulpallavarayan of Chakrapanimallur.⁹⁵ His thrones were called *Malavarayan* and *Pallavarayan*. His wife was Ulagamudivai Vikrama Chola, the brother-in-law of Mar Vikrama, is also called brother-in-law of Maran Sundara II—clearly indicating that the latter was Vikrama's brother—a relation⁹⁶ which was unknown to us.

Jatavarman Sundara (Acc A D 1252)

He was the greatest of the kings of the Second Pandyan empire. Under him the Pandyan empire reached the zenith of glory both in the political conquests and cultural achievements. The entire Tamil country and beyond, from Kanyakumari to Nellore in Andhra came under his active control. Malainadu and Kongunadu were also conquered, thus deserving his title *Emmandalamum Kondaruliya Sundara Pandya Devar*. His impartial benefactions to Chidambaram and Srirangam temples are well known. He performed a *tulabhara* and erected a Golden Hall for Lord Nataraja. He covered the tower for Ranganatha at Srirangam with gold and assumed the title *Hemachandan Raja* and *Koil-ponmeinda-perumal*. He set up images called *koil-ponmeinda-perumal* in different parts of his country⁹⁷. These are well known facts. Some additional information is furnished by the more recently discovered records of his

93 K A N Sastri, *op cit.* p 158

94 ARE 1927-28, p 56

95 ARE 1939-40 p, 247

96 ARE 1929-30, p 27

97 For example at Tiruvendipuram, ARE, 1937-38 p 75

He built a hall in the Vishnu temple at Alagarkoil. It was *Koyil-pommarinda-perumal tirumandapam*.⁹⁸ At Srirangam itself he is supposed to have built another mandapa named *Seranaṭṭamraṇ tirumandapa*. This was a title he assumed after his conquest over Travancore. A temple on the eastern side of Sundaresa shrine in Minakshi A temple was probably built by him as it is called *Avanuvenda tirugopuram*.⁹⁹ Two other records of Jatavarman Sundara refer to a service called *Avanuvenda Raman Sandi* called after the king by his birth star given in the record viz *Uttirattadi* does not fit in with Jatavarman Sundara I whose natal star was *Mula*. Nor does it fit with Sundara III whose birth star was *Pushya*. So this has to be ascribed to Jatavarman Sundara II (Acc. 1276).¹⁰⁰

There was some doubt about the identification of the king who bore the title *Ellāntalaiyana-perumal*. A recently discovered record from Tiruvendipuram states that Sundara II set up the image of *Ellāntalaiyana perumal* in the name of his elder brother (*annalār*) *Sundara Pandya deva*. This would show that this title belonged to Sundara II. Maravarman Kulasekhara also had this title.¹⁰¹

Jatavarman Sundara probably built the Sundara Pandya gopuram of Vishnu temple at Srivalkuntam as attested by a record from Tevapiran Tadan. An influential Vaishnava leader is said to have been killed by Sundara Pandya while he was camping at Viradavalem in the 2nd year of his reign.¹⁰²

Jatavarman Vira Pandya (Acc. 1253—1268)

He was a contemporary and co-regent of Jatavarman Sundara II. He commenced his co-regency two years after Sundara I.e. A.D. 1253. He takes credit for some of the successes like the conquest of Kalingam, Ilam, Vadugu etc. As Prof Sastri correctly points out, he apparently did all these under the orders and on behalf of Sundara II. His inscriptions are available mostly in Pandyanadu and some in

98 83 of 1928-29

99 281 of 1939-40

100 299 and 300 of 1943-44

101 ARE 1955 56

102 573 of 1944-45

103 *PIL* p. 25

Cholamandalam and Tondaimandalam. He performed Virabhishekam and Vijayabhishekam at Chidambaram in A D 1267. The mandapa where he performed this came to be called *Virā-Pandyan-Tirumandapam* ¹⁰⁴

A record calls him by the epithet *Vellanaṭ-Venrān*. Vallan might stand for Ballala or the Hoysala. It may be remembered that Vira Pandya's contemporary Jatavarman Sundara defeated the Hoysalas at Kannanur and killed the king Somesvara. So, Vira Pandya's title has a bearing on this conflict ¹⁰⁵

A record from Sucindram dated Kollam 413 (i.e., A D 1238) makes reference to constructions made by Venad ruler Vira-Ravi-Varma through an agent. The same agent also received money endowment from Chokkattandal *alias* Ulagamulududaiyar, the queen of Vira Pandya in A D 1256 ¹⁰⁶

Māravarman Kulasakhara I (Acc 1268-1312)

He was also a contemporary of Jatavarman Sundara and Vira Pandya. In 1268, the date of his accession, all the three were kings — a practice very peculiar to the Pandyan Kingdom alone and which had struck the foreign visitors also. Not only this, the rule of nearly 5 kings overlap with one another, making it rather difficult to demarcate sharply their jurisdiction. Thus, as Prof Sastri shows, a Maravarman Vikrama Pandya, two Jatavarman Sundaras (I and II), Jatavarman Vikrama Pandya and the Maravarman Kulasekhara, are known to have had their rule in close proximity and even overlap. Close to them again were two Sri Vallabhas, Maravarman and Jatavarman (acc 1257 and 1291) ¹⁰⁷. The foreign visitors were struck by this peculiar system prevailing here. Marco Polo who was here by the end of the 13th century wrote of the "Five royal brothers" and "five crowned kings". Wassaf also mentions Sundara Pandya and his three brothers, each ruling independently. This system of joint rulers or co-regents or many ruling simultaneously must have been the result of the great extension

104 616 of 1929-30, S. Pandarattar, *Pandiar Varalaru*, P. 136

105 94 of 1933-34

106 ARE 1958 59, p. 18

107 Sastri, *op cit* p. 182

of the empire during 13th century and an imitation of the Chola practice of sending out princes of the royal family as viceroys ¹⁰⁰

Maravarman Kulasekhara was however a powerful monarch whose inscriptions are numerous. By this time the Chola line had ceased to be a power. Jayamkonda-solamandalam is mentioned as the seat of Kulasekhara. Malainadu, Soanadu, Koagu Ilam and Toadaimandalam are mentioned as his conquests. They were already subjugated, but probably some local uprising caused them to be re-conquered. Hence, his titles *Cheranai Venra, Kollamkonda* etc.

A record of his 35th year speaks of throne *Kachchikkurachan* in his palace at Viradavalam in Uraiyur Kurram ¹⁰¹. This palace was also called *Uyyakkondan-Tirumalai*, 4 miles from Uraiyur ¹⁰². Another throne in his palace at Jayamkondasolapuram was called *Pāṭirgarayan*. These are clear proofs that the Cholas had ceased to exist as a power and their towns and capitals became the seats of Pandyan power. This may also indicate the possibility of Maravarman Kulasekhara being put in charge of the newly conquered Chola territory.

A new record from Srirangam datable to A.D. 1277 mentions a donation by the commander of the Pandyan forces that invaded Ceylon. His full name was Matitungan Taniniru venrān Perumal *alias* Arya chakravarti of Chakravartinātur in Sevvurukkar-nadu ¹⁰³. The Siaghaliese *Mahātamsa* speaks about this Aryachakravarti as the hero of the Pandyan expedition who sacked the fortress of the city of Subhagiri and took away the venerable tooth relic and much wealth.

A very useful record of Kulasekhara from Veaugopala temple at Ilaiyangudi speaks of the chieftain Vanadarayar Kalingarayan who constructed a number of temples and established *agharas* for the memory of his overlord Kulasekhara and his son prince Vira Pandya. ¹⁰⁴ The chieftain was evidently a Bana chieftain. The Vānadaraiyar began to gain importance later and several of them nam d

100 *Id.*

102 319 of 1950-50

110 242 of 1941-42 — ARE, Part II p. 243

111 7 of 1936-37

112 ARE 1919-20

Mahabali Vānadaraiyas figure in later records in Alagarkoil and Srivilliputtur. One of them known as Kulasekhara Mahabali Vānadaraiyan figures in the inscription of Kulasekhara.

Jatāvarman Vira Pandya (Acc 1270-71) and *Jatāvarman Sundara II* (Acc 1276)

Not much was known about the relationship between these two and Kulasekhara except that they figure simultaneously. Some records found recently have cleared the doubts. From two records, we come to know that Vira Pandya and Sundara were Kulasekhara's sons.¹¹³ One records of the former mentions that he helped in the conquest of Kongu and Ilam.¹¹⁴ There are two interesting records at Sri Vaikuntam which prove the contemporaneity of Kulasekhara, Sundara and Vira Pandya. A Sri Vaishnava leader Tevapiran Tādar met all the three kings at different places and probably on different occasions for endowments.¹¹⁵ He met Kulasekhara at his palace at Gangaikondasolapuram in his 38th year, Sundara Pandya at Viradavalan (near Uraiyur) in his 2nd year and Vira Pandya at Kandivur in his 2nd year. From this we can know Sundara Pandya and Vira Pandya were junior contemporaries and sons of Kulasekhara.

Jatavarman Sundara II is better represented. He ruled between 1276 and 1292-93. He is the "Soundr Bandi Devar" of Marco Polo and Wassaf witnessed his death in Hijra 692.

Māravarman Vikrama Pandya (Acc 1283 to 1296)

As pointed out earlier, he was a junior contemporary and co-regent of elder brother Kulasekhara. He had titles Bhuvanaikaviran, Korkaikāvalan, Rajakkal Nayan etc. At Tiruvendipuram, a special offering to the temple named *Rajakkal-nayan-Sandi* was performed on Vaikasi month in *hasta* star, probably the king's natal star. Another offering named *Vikrama-pandyan sandi* was performed on the day of *Rohini* being his coronation day.¹¹⁶ A record from Tayumanavar temple, Tiruchi mentions the formation of a Chaturevedimangalam named

113 ARE, 1949-50

114 *Ibid*, and also ARE 1935-36, p 82

115 ARE 1960-61, p 23

116 ARE 1955-65, p 7

after the mother of Kulasekhara, Kannudiya nayaki¹¹⁷ Vikrama's wife was Ulagamulududaiyar for whom a service or sandi was instituted at Tirunamanallur in South Arcot.¹¹⁸

Vikrama Pandya is credited with having fought successfully with the Cholas on the banks of the Vellaru. We get some details about this battle now. A certain Vanadaraiyan and his sons fought heroically¹¹⁹. His throne *Munaiyadarayan* at Madurai and *Melaiyadarayan* at Rajendram are mentioned. His 5th year record from South Arcot district speaks of a nādu named as Vikrama Pandya valanadu.¹²⁰

Civil war and the Muhammadan invasion

Towards the last years of Maravarman Kulasekhara another son, Jatavarman Sundara III become the sub-king sometime in A.D. 1303 along with his elder brother Jotavarman Vira Pandya who ascended the throne in 1297. Wassaf has recorded the civil war between these two brothers. In this, the old king Kulasekhara was murdered and Sundara Pandya was also defeated. He apparently sought the help of the invading Muslim forces under Malik Kafur, the general of Allaud din. His invasion only added to the confusion. We have the accounts of Wassaf and Amir Khusru about his raids. Another invasion under Khusru Khao has received full treatment in S. K. Iyengar's book *South India and Her Muhammadan Invaders*.

Malikkafur's inroad as Prof. Sastri observes, marked the beginning of the end of the Second Empire. The northern part of the empire went to the Kakatiyas. Ravivarman Kulasekhara also ran through the entire Tamil country in 1311-12 soon after Malik Kafur left South India. From then on the history of the Pandyas became the story of progressive decline, ending in the restriction of their sway to portions of Tirunelveli district and towards the close of 16th century in their final disappearance. This Jatavarman Sundara III (Acc. 1303) had the title *Pōdandarama* and he also seems to have issued a coin in

117 *Id.*,

118 252-3 of 1937-40

119 270 of 1937-40

120 137 of 1945-57

that name. His record from South Arcot mentions the formation of settlement called Kodandarama-Chaturvedimangalam ¹²¹

His contemporary and rival Vira Pandya had the title Kaliyugaraman. His record of 31st year from North Arcot region records a gift by his queen Ulagamuluduaiyar *alias* Kaliyugaraman-tiruttol-piriyāda-tirunagai ¹²². His record at Madurai mentions his *Tirumandirai* officer Tyagavinda-Brahmarajan ¹²³

Recently, some inscriptions of the time of the Muslim occupation of Pandyanadu have been found and I will close this lecture by referring to them. In the Rudrakotisvara temple at Velangudi in Tiruppattur taluk there is a record dated in the Hijra 736 and the 736 and the reigning king is called Maharājan Surattan (Sultan). This Hijra year corresponds to A D 1335-36. It records gift of land by Uravar to an individual (Munayadaraiyan) for his services to the village during the Muslim invasion (*Turukkar-vanam*). This affords evidence of the disturbed times that followed in the wake of the establishment of Muslim rule at Madurai by about A D 1323 (during the time of the Tughlaq). This would also show that the Sultan of Madurai became independent of Delhi by this time. It became so even in Hijra 734 = A D 1333-34. The people were aware of the presence of the new ruler and called him Surattan i c, Sultan who probably was Jalaluddin Ashan Shah, the first Sultan of Madurai ¹²⁴

At Kayalpattanam, a number of Arabic and Tamil inscriptions from tomb-stones datable to 1336 and later (even upto 1496) have been found. The earliest dated in Hijra 737 in A D 1336 found on the mosque mentions construction of a Jama Masjid to Sultan Muhammad Jamaluddin and its completion. ¹²⁵

Later history of the Pandyas

The period of Madurai Sultanate, though only brief, was one of turmoil and widespread disturbance. The Pandyan country had witnessed several invasions earlier, by the Pallavas, the Cholas and

121 ARE 1956-57, p 77-78

122 ARE 1939-40, p 251

123 279 of 1942

124 ARE, 1958-59

125 ARE, 1949-50, p 9

others. But this invasion was entirely of a different character. The earlier conquerors never disturbed religious institutions and practices nor interfered with the individual's faith in the chosen religion. But this new alien wave with a holy war-cry tended to shake the very foundations of the hoary religious institutions like the temples. The enormous loot of the temples taken by Malik Kafur and his later counterparts are well attested by the contemporary Muslim historians and the indigenous records.¹²⁶ The Sanskrit epic *Madurai Vijayam* by Ganagadevi, the queen of Kampana and the *Koil-olugu*, give a vivid picture of the heart-rending conditions of the times. The *koil-olugu* describes the sack of Srirangam and the *Madurai-talavaralāra* the sack of Madurai. They are also confirmed by a number of inscriptions from the Hindu temples. From a record at Tiruppattur (Ramanathapuram district) we learn that the Muslim forces struck panic in the country, destroyed the temple, ransacked its treasures and desecrated the images therein. A certain Visdayadevan of Kunrakudi repaired this damage done and reconsecrated the images in the 46th year of Jatavarman Trivikrama Vira Pandya for which he earned the gratitude of the people of Tiruppattur. He was given certain special privileges and honours.¹²⁷ This would show the local resistance to the Muslim invasions. The Hoyasalesvara temple at Kannanur (near Tiruchi) was converted as a mosque. It was again restored to the Hindus by Kampana and the deity re-consecrated. It was also during the Muslim attack the idol of Lord Ranganathan at Srirangam was taken away by the Sri Varshnava leader Sri Pillai Lokacharya to Alagarkoil and then from there to further south and ultimately to Tirupati. The idol was brought back and re-consecrated at Srirangam by Kampana who was ably assisted by Gopanna, the chieftain of Gingee. This account is attested by the Sanskrit work *Prapanṇāmollam*.¹²⁸ All these would show the sad state of affairs during the Muslim occupation of Pandya-adesa and the utter political vacuum. The Pandya's were compelled to retreat to the extreme south and the Hoyasalas under Ballala III after giving a dogged

126 See accounts of Ibn Batuta and Amir Khairu.

127 161 of 1936.

128 For a full discussion of Kampana's campaigns see S. H. Iyer, *South India and Mohammedan Invasions* and A. Krishna Rao, *Tamil country under the Vijayanagar*.

fight also went down. There is evidence to show that the Sultanate had control over Madurai upto A D 1371. Kampana's inscription of this date, records his general Gopanna's victory over the 'Turushkars'. By about A D 1377-78, to be sure, all vestiges of the Muslim rule were removed and the Madurai region came under the sway of the newly risen Hindu empire of Vijayanagar.

What part the Pandyas played in resisting the Muslim attacks and whether they helped the Hoysalas in their heroic struggle are questions for which no satisfactory answer is yet known. Apparently, there was no co-ordination or concerted action and the Pandyas ploughed their lonely furrow in the extreme south, leaving Madurai to its fate. This heart-rending condition is graphically described by Ganagadevi's *Madurā Vijayam* which says —

"The temples in the land have fallen into neglect as worship in them has been stopped ... The suburban gardens of Madurai present a most painful sight — on every side are seen rows of stakes from which swing strings of human skulls strung together. The Tamraparani is flowing red with the blood of slaughtered cows. The Veda is forgotten and justice has gone into hiding ... despair is writ large on the faces of the unfortunate Dravidars"¹²⁰. The work also makes a pathetic reference to the Pandyas and their ancient sword which had now passed on to Kampana. It mentions that the Pandyas who held unrivalled sway for a long time lost their power by the cruel stroke of fate and so Agastya sent the sword to Kampana. It fell to his lot to undertake the task of liberating Madurai from the yoke of Sultanate and thus fulfilled a task which the Pandyas could not accomplish.

Both, during the period of Madurai Sultanate and later when Vijayanagar occupied Madurai, the Pandyas had their restricted rule in Tirunelveli-Tenkasi region. But it would seem that people in the distant districts did not feel the impact of the establishment of Sultanate in Madurai sometime in A D 1330 or deliberately avoided any reference to the Muslim rule and continued to quote the regnal years of the Pandyan kings. The other interpretation would be that the Sultanate's authority was limited to the vicinity of Madurai and the interior and outlying places still continued to be under the different Pandyan

kings Thus, the records of Maravarman Kulasekara who ruled between 1314 and 1346 are found at Sirkali in Thanjavur district. His co-regent was one Jatavarman Parakrama Pandya (A.D. 1315-1347) whose records are only few at Tirunelveli Pudukottai and Thanjavur. The last mentioned king built the western tower and completed in A.D. 1323.¹⁵⁰ Maravarman Vira Pandya (c. A.D. 1334-1380) has left records in Pudukkottai area. There were four more Parakrama Pandyas — one who ruled between 1335-52 a second who had his accession in A.D. 1357 a third in 1367 who renovated the central shrine and the *mandapa* at Kuttalam (in 1387) and another Parakrama whose accession took place sometime in A.D. 1334. We hear of a Jatavarman Kulasekhara who probably ruled from A.D. 1395. The records of the last mentioned kings are practically confined to Tirunelveli region. The Madurai region passed on to the hands of the Vijayanagar who gradually extended their sway throughout South India. The Tirunelveli Pandyas became more or less subordinate to the Vijayanagar who however recognised *locus standi* of the ancient Pandyan line to continue as semi independent rulers in the Tirunelveli area. But intermittently they indulged in the ambition to revive the ancient glory of the Pandyas which, however did not meet with success. Thus during the time of Virupaksha II a Pandyan chief Dhuvanika Vira Samarakolāhala is said to have headed the forces of long-eared men (*lamba karna* or *cherulu potu*) and ran through the Tamil Nadu right upto Kanchi. Bhavanika Vira's inscriptions are found in the Flambaresvara temple, Kanchi. But Saluva Narasimha the general of Virupaksha, came down to the south and expelled the invaders as far south as Rameswaram. This occurred sometime in A.D. 1470.¹⁵¹

But for this episode the Pandyas continued to be in charge of Tirunelveli area owing allegiance to the Vijayanagar kingdom. During Achyutaraya's period when the ruler of Trivandrum made incursions into the Pandyan territory the Vijayanagar repulsed them and restored the territory to the Pandyas. Achyutaraya even married a Pandyan princess.¹⁵² The last of these kings lived upto A.D. 1562. In the

150. Kulasekhara Mahalila Varadachari is mentioned as the uncle of this Parakrama Pandya (ART : 1936-37 p. 77-78)

151. *Further notes on Vijayanagar History*

152. *Heras, Tamil Dynasties* pp. 113-17

meantime, the Nayaks of Madurai rose to importance. The Nayak governorship was founded at Madurai sometime in A.D. 1533, but later on became almost independent in its authority and even challenged the Vijayanagar kingdom in its last days. By about the middle of the 17th century the Nayak's power spread to the whole of the Pandyan country, including Tirunelveli region.

B ADMINISTRATIVE ASPECTS

1. Territorial and Administrative Units

Some considerable body of evidence has come up regarding the territorial divisions and administrative units of Pandimandalam. Sri Y. Subbarayalu has brought together some new data on this subject which deserves our attention.¹³³ The area was first known as Pandi-nadu and only from 13th century as Pandi-mandalam. From the time of Rajaraja I i.e. about A.D. 990, it was called *Rajaraja-valanadu*; as *Rajaraja-mandalam* from A.D. 1012 and *Rajaraja-Pandi-nadu* still later. There were about 100 *nadus* in all. Among them were some with suffix of *nadu*, some with *kūrram*, some with *kulakkil* or *ērī-kil*, *Muttam* and a few *Valanadus*. What were these *nadus*? Were they simply administrative divisions? They were probably at first basic agricultural settlements, nucleating around certain viable areas with common water-source, soil, geographical contiguity etc. For example, Madurai was in the territorial unit called *Mādakkula-kil*, that means a certain tract close to the Mādakkulam tank which took sustenance from the tank had certain common links, which bracketed the villages with a *nadu* or *kulakkil*-unit. *Nadu* literally means an area with human habitation and civilization as against *Kādu*-(*Kadukonru-Nadakkil*) and these nucleating habitation zones with viable agricultural community became the various *nadus*, which later on assumed administrative character as well. The territorial assembly was called *Nattār*. The *Nattār* was a group of the representatives of the Vellanvagai landlords i.e., Urar. Being the influential and authoritative group, by virtue of agricultural land-holdings, they were the people usually addressed by the king, whenever a grant was made. Royal communications were addressed to them

133 I am thankful to Y. Subbarayalu for permitting me to consult his paper "Some reflections on the territorial units in Pandi-mandalam" Paper read in Pandyan Seminar, Madurai, 1971

Their presence was necessary whenever the boundary of the gifted land was demarcated. This view is corroborated by the Dalavaypuram and Sivakasi plates, where it is expressly stated that the gifted land was delimited in the presence the *Nattars* and *Urar*. They also belonged to the Vellala community who formed a cohesive agricultural group tied together by marriage and other common interests. Some times the *Nattars* of several nadus assembled together for common purpose through the assemblies of *Chitra mēliperianāttar*. An inscription of Jatavarman Sundara calls them as *Nattumakkal* and *Bhamiputtirar* who belonged to the Vellala community as could be seen from their *prastis*¹⁰. They had a corporate existence. They had the name *Chitramēliperianāttar* because of their emblem of plough which they worshipped and adopted as their standard. An inscription describes Vikrama Pandya as the patron of agricultural community.

The *Nattars* were supreme arbiters over lands of the nadus and the kings had to seek their endorsement for their orders regarding any agricultural undertaking or arrangement. *Ialanadus* were there in Pandyanadu even in earlier days for example *Sri Vallabha valanadu* and *Amitaguna valanadu*. *Paodi martanda valanadu* are mentioned in the inscription of Varaguna II and Rajasimha I¹¹.

About A.D. 1021 during the time of Rajendra I the entire Pandi mandalam was divided into four valanadus—all called after the Chola kings.

1. Rajendra Chola valanadu
2. Madurantaka valanadu
3. Mudikonda Chola valanadu and
4. Uttama Chola valanadu

But this arrangement was only a passing phase. It only lasted upto the time of Kulottunga I.

During the Chola occupation of Ialanadu they changed the names of mandalams, nadus, villages, towns, temples and even streets. This process of Cholaisation is almost like the present day trend of changing the names according to the wishes of the rulers. I will illustrate this by quoting only one example.

¹⁰ ARE 191-32 p. 7.

¹¹ ARE 191-32 p. 5; 9, 11, 13, 14, 21.

An inscription of Sundara Chola Pandya from Mannarkoil in Tirnuelveli district states that the place was called Rajaraja Chaturvedimangalam, the temple was called Rajendra Chola vinnagar in Mullinadu in Mudikonda Chola Valanādu in Rajaraja-Pandinādu. The signatories of this record together with their native address are given ¹⁸⁶ They are all after the names of Chola kings, queens, daughters and their various titles

- 1 Mummudi Chola-cheri
- 2 Arulmolidevar-cheri.
- 3 Nittavinoda-cheri
- 4 Sundara Chola-cheri.
- 5 Vānavan mādevi-cheri.
- 6 Sembian-madevi-cheri.
7. Kundavvai-cheri
8. Panchavan-mādevi-cheri.
- 9 Ulokamādevi-cheri.

Even a street at Ambasamudram was called *Rejendrasola-perunderu*.¹⁸⁷ A corridor in the temple at Sermadevi was called *Rajadhirajan-tiruchuralai* ¹⁸⁸ Thus the names of the street, temple, and its parts, the village, the nadu, the mandalam, all underwent a change overnight, the moment the Cholas occupied the Pandyadesa.

But, after the Pandyas regained control, they again changed all the Chola names, gave them their own names. Thus, we begin to have Vikrama Pandya-valanādu (around Wandiwash in South Arcot 134 of 1956-57) Varaguna-valanadu (119 of 1910) etc. Pandya-Kulasani-valanadu was changed into Pandya-Kulapati-Valanadu. An inscription of Jatavarman Sri Vallabha mentions this reverse trend

Stone-dam	Parākarama-Pandyan Kallanai ,
Channel	Vira Pandyan-kāl
River	: Sri Vallabha pērāru

136 S I I XIV, 145

137 146

138 190

But it must be said that the Pandyas were less fanatical than the Cholas in this race for re-naming the places

2 Village Sabhas

The *gramam* or *Ur* was the basic unit of local administration and we get ample evidence to prove that there was a sound system of local administration akin to the contemporary Pallavas and later Chola days. The Manur inscription of Marān Sadaiyan datable to A D 800 gives a good picture of the composition of the *Mahasabha* of a Brahmadeya village, its various Committees (*rānams*) qualification of membership etc. which are very reminiscent of the famous Uttaramerur inscriptions of the Chola days. But this is earlier in point of time and therefore important. Prof Sastri regretted that its full text was not available or published when he wrote his book.¹³⁷ But the same is now available.¹³⁸ The first important point is that it is called மக்கள் சபை. It was summoned by beating of a drum — *perunguri Sāri* and met at the stated hour in a public place. Membership was regulated by qualifications of property and learning. There was no election as at Uttaramerur but all important property interests were represented on it. இவ்வூர் பங்குடைபாச் மக்கள் சபையில் மனமுடு மெது

They wanted that among the children of the share holders only one who is well behaved and has studied the code of law (*dharma*) may be on the village assembly, that shares purchased or acquired as *stridhana* could entitle one only to full membership in the assembly and in no case half or three-quarter member recognised. Such purposes should also elect only such qualified men to represent their shares as have studied a whole *veda*. Those who do not possess full membership as laid down cannot stand on any committee (*rariyam*) for the management of the village affairs. That those who satisfy the prescribed conditions and become members should conduct themselves in a proper way and should not blindly oppose the proceedings by saying 'no no' to every thing and if they did so they would be punished a *ḍina* on each of the

137 S. N. S. M. p. 94

138 E. I. A. S. p. 9-11. Prof. Sastri has if I am later called a *ḍina* on each of the in 1912

(அன்று அன்று குத்துக்கால செயவாரையும் குத்துக்கால் செய்வாராகு உறவாயுடனிருப்பாரையும் .)

The purpose of this record is obviously to regulate the membership and the composition of *vāriams*. Probably, all propertied people becoming members made the assembly rather an unwieldy body. Again, proceedings of such a large body were bound to run into chaos at certain stage and hence the drastic rules of conduct.

Another interesting inscription regarding the functioning of the Mahasabha has come to light in recent years from Sucindram¹⁴¹. It is dated kollam 403 — A D 1228-29. It records the details of the organisation of the groups of Malayala brahmins from Kilkara and their representatives in the Mahasabha of the village. They were divided into 8 groups (*adavus*), each belonging to specified houses. The eight members elected from each of the eight houses were authorised by the Mahasabha to assemble and deliberate on matters connected with the temple and the village. They were forbidden from having transactions of any kind in respect of temple lands to their own advantage. In case the of a defaulter, a fine of 12 kalanjus and 5 kānams of gold was imposed and his property could be confiscated by the Sabha.

All Chaturvedimangalams or Brahmadayams had the Sabha. The non-Brahmadaya village had another type of assembly called *Ur* which probably functioned on similar lines. But we do not know much about the proceedings. The *Urar* of Velangudi is mentioned in a record from Tiruppattur taluk in the year 1333. It records the gift of land made by the *Urar* to a leader who did meritorious service to the village in times of confusion¹⁴². Sivakasi plates (10th century A D) mention that delimiting the village boundaries was done in the presence of *nattar* of Meluvembanadu and *Urar* of Nalapuram. While *Ur* was the assembly of the village (like the Sabha,) the *Nadu* was bigger assembly which had representatives for several *Urs* and *Sabhas*. The members of the *nadus* were called *Nattars*¹⁴³. Periodical meetings of the nattars to deliberate on matters of wide interest are recorded.

141 ARE 1958-59, p 18

142 *Ibid*, p 19, and see 275 of 1941. Tiruchendur inscription of Varaguna II describes the functioning of the *Mahasabha* (E I XXI p 101)

143 1960-61, p 16

Instances of one single assembly functioning for several villages are also available.¹⁴⁴ The officers of the king in the locality always took the assemblies into their confidence while collecting taxes and remitting them. In one instance certain persons were alleged to have not paid their tax dues and forced to sell their lands to the temple. But when the question was re-examined subsequently by another higher officer and the Bhattas of the assembly it was found that these persons were not in default. Hence, their lands were ordered to be restored to them.¹⁴⁵

On the whole, we feel that the village-assemblies were functioning actively in Pandimandalam just like their counterparts in the Chola country. But it should be noted that in point of time the village assembly system was earlier in Pandyan country and hence the forerunner of the Chola counterparts.

3 Temple Administration

The temple authorities were variously described as *aṇḍaligaṇṇar* *Sri Bandarattār* *Sri Maheswaras* *Sri Laishwaras* (for Vishnu temples) *Mūlaparishad*. In the Kuttalam temple *Pāsupata perumallal* are mentioned as managing the temple affairs.¹⁴⁶ The *Mūlaparishad* was an important body immediately in charge of the temple affairs receiving the endowments and putting them to proper use as envisaged in the trust keep their lands, money, jewels etc., in proper custody and even lending on interest for agricultural and trading purposes — all under the general control of the *Maha Sabha* of the village. Generally, *Mūlaparishad* and the *Maha Sabha* find mention as independent bodies but they functioned often as one unit. A record from Sucindram indicates that *Mūlaparudai Sabha* supervised the affairs of the local temple under the direction of the *Maha Sabha*. It was an executive body under the *Maha Sabha*. In exceptional cases the *Mūlaparishad* gave over the management of the temple into the hands of the *Maha Sabha*.¹⁴⁷ *Mūlaparishads* at Tiruppattur and Tiruttangal temples were functioning actively. Since the temple was the pivot of the social, cultural and economic life of the village, the temple management

144 26 of 1930-31

145 ARE 12 7-8 p. 7

146 S. I. I. N. No. 66

147 12 of 1933 V

had considerable powers not only in religious proceedings etc., but also in other spheres where the temple had a vital role to play

4 *Military System*

A few facts relating to the army organisation and its position in the land may be summed up here. Highest military chief was called *Maha Sāmantan* and he was usually not merely soldier but also a great scholar and cultured man. Such an example we have in *Sāmantan Ganapatī* and his brother *Ettī Sattan* who were intellectuals and military officers as well. Similarly, *Māran Kārī* the Chief Minister had a distinguished military career as attested by the *Velvikkudī* grant. Many warriors came from the Brahmin class also such as *Māran Kārī* himself (under Varaguna I), *Narayana Cholāntaka-Brahmarayan* under *Vīra Pandia*¹⁴⁸ and *Aryan Charkravartī*, the military commander of *Maravarman Kulasekhara* who had a triumphant march to Ceylon. *Parakrama Narayana Brahmasrīrajan* was a *Dandanāyakan* (captain of a regiment) under *Vikrama Chola Pandya* (S I I XIV, No 189). Similarly, *Srīdharan Mantri Eiyman* was a *maha-sāmanta* of the Pandyan army. Many top military men who served under *Nadunjadiyan Parantaka I* came from the *Vaidya Kula* of *Karavandapuram*, which was a fortified town with military garrison stationed there¹⁴⁹. These military people have done many pious benefactions like excavation of cave temples of *Anaimalai* (by *Māran Kārī*) *Tirupparankundram* (by *Sāmantan Ganapatī*) etc. They were honoured with titles like *Mūvenda-mangalappēraraiyan*, *Pāndi-malangappēraraiyan*, *Pāndimartamangalappēraraiyan*, *Vīramangalappēraraiyan*, *Pāndi Ilangomangalappēraraiyan*.

Nakkan Pullan was the leader of the Pandyan army during *Varaguna II*'s successful campaign at *Idavai*. We have already made a reference to the fact that successive members of the entire *Pallivelān* family served as military officers and commanders under successive Pandyan kings — *Varaguna I*, *Srīmāra Sūri Vallabha*, and *Varaguna II*.

From this we can know that certain families dedicated themselves to military service and this passed on from father to son and also

148 ARE 1958-59, p 16

149 K. V. Raman, *Karavandapuram — A fortified Pandyan Town* J I H Jubilee vol

brothers. On the whole the evidence suggests that military commanders and the army under them were loyal to the ruling king. Usurpation by military leaders so common in Vijayanagar and Muslim period was something unheard of in the Pandyan history. Only the fight between the ruling brothers created confusion periodically. Even in that stage coup or usurpation did not occur. It is a tribute to the loyalty and discipline of the Pandyan military chiefs.

This fidelity to the master is well illustrated by the two hero stones found at Vilinjam with *vallulettu* inscriptions. The hero is stated to have discharged his debt (*Senjoruppperunkadan*) by giving up his life for the sake of his master, probably a Pandyan king. A similar hero-stone of Maranjadayana records that when the Chera forces attacked Karai kottai a Ulvittu Sevaka, Ranakirtti gave up his life (ARE 1958-59 p. 16).

The Pandyan kings seem to have placed military posts and garrisons at different parts of the realm particularly in strategic places. Very often the regiments also looked after the law and order of certain localities or helped the local officers in the administration. We have already mentioned about the fortified town of Uggrankottai under the charge of certain military officers. Sometimes, certain areas were assigned to a body of army as *sief* and they were in charge of collecting taxes under the orders of the king. Such regiments were called *Padai Karanar*. We have a record of 13th century (Mar Kulasekhara) from Tiruvadanai which carries the royal order assigning certain taxes of the locality in favour of the local temple. The order was addressed to the *Padai Karanar* or who were probably the accountants or executive authority of the regiments stationed there. This village must have formed part of their *sief*. They were responsible for the payment of taxes due from the village.¹⁰⁰

At Anaiyur near Madurai a Pandyan regiment was stationed. The temple records frequently mention the *Padaittalai ar* as being entrusted with the gifts and endowments meant for the temple.¹⁰¹ Similar instances of the *Padaittalai ar* looking after the temple or

100 ARE 1958-59 p. 16

101 BM No 50 47-9 of 1922 2. E I V 451 C E I V p. 46

in-chief of the army. Many important officers of the realm were simply called *Kalingarayan*, *Malavarayan*, *Pallarayan*, *Munaiyadrayar*. The king first communicated his orders to them. It may be interesting to know that Pandyan throots were also called by the same names. The royal office or a secretariat where the orders were drafted was called *eluttumandapa*¹⁵⁵. The darbar hall was called by different names such as *Alaga Pāndyan-kūdam*, *manābharanam-tirumāligai* etc.

Tiruvāsal mudali is mentioned as an officer of the king's household¹⁵⁷. Similarly *agopparāra-mudali*¹⁵⁸. A lady of the king's household by name *Tiruvudaiyal* is mentioned.¹⁵⁹ Certain executive officers who carried out the king's orders called *Maṣaretti* of the *Pūraruvartinaikalam*,¹⁶⁰. The latter seems to have been the highest revenue body akin to our Revenue Board. The head of this board was called *Tinakala-nāyakam*. *Nadu-ragai sarōr* were the important revenue officers and surveyors of lands in the nadu who sorted them according to their grade and fixed taxes etc. *Vaniyalar*¹⁶¹ were the revenue accountants who kept the details of revenues for each village and *aḍḍu*. The title deeds of donated lands were signed by them. *Mudali* is mentioned as a tax officer¹⁶². All copper plates of the Pandyas are couched in beautiful Sanskrit and Tamil and many times in the *manṣprarāla* style, clearly indicating that both the languages held place of high honour. The composers of both were rewarded and respected. The Tamil portion of the Velvikudi grant was composed by Enadi Sattan Sattan who was also a high ranking military officer of the realm. He was the brother of Sattan Ganapati the *mahasūmantan* of Nedunjadaiyan Parāntaka. Similarly Fiti Chattan a high ranking officer under Śrīmāraṇa Śrī Vallabha was a renowned Tamil poet who came in the line of Sangam poets. Śrī Vallabha's son Parantaka Vira Narayana called himself as *Senarai lōr*. In his Dalavaypuram grant he paid high tributes to the composers of Sanskrit and Tamil portion

155 13 of 1939 10

157 42 of 1947 47

158 216 of 1939 20

159 25 of 1941 4

160 17 of 1939 33

161 314 of 1920 20

162 94 of 1933 34

and rewarded them “இதற்குச் செப்பேடு வாசகத்தை ஆரியம
விராயத்தமிழ் தொடுத்த ” The Pandyan kings considered Sanskrit
and Tamil with equal respect and regard This is evident in all their
inscriptions and titles The beautiful Sanskrit and Tamil equivalents
used drive home this point. To cite a few examples

Solantalai konda	:	Solāntaka
Emmandalamnm-kondaruliya		Sakalabhuvana Chakravarti
Ponmeinda Perumal		Hemachandanarāja
Gajādhyaaksha		Anai Olukku
Dramila Maharaja		Tamil Pēraraiyan
Nadu-nilai-nāyakam		Madhyastha

The king's love for taking both Sanskrit and Tamil titles is best
illustrated in the Dalavaypuram plates It gives the various titles of
Viranarayana such as Kūdalkōn, Srinikētan, Sri Parāntaka,
Gurucharidan, Sentamil-kōn *

The point to be noted is that a sort of liberal bilingualism prevail-
led in their administrative documents.

*Araiya*s were probably of ministers' rank advising the king on
matters of welfare activities, endowment etc There were *Araiya*s,
*Pēraraiya*s, *Vijayaraiya*s, *Tennan Tamilvel*, *Tennavan Brahmarayan*,
*Pandya Viluppēraraiya*s, *Pāndi Pallavaraiyass*, *Pandya Kongaraiya*s,
Nānji-nādālvān They often figures in inscriptions as those at whose
request king made certain endowments, or exempted taxes etc Eviden-
tly they were the king's representatives or officers serving in the various
regions and advising the king. For example, Nānji-nādālvān was in

*The Sinnamanur Plates of Rajasimha affords eloquent proof for this It
describes the services of the Pandyan kings to Tamil and Sanskrit It
says

வளமதுரை நகர கண்டும மறறதற்கு மதில வகுத்தும்
உளமிகக மதியதஞ் லொண்டமிழும் வடமொழியும் பழுதறத்
தானாராயநது பண்டிதரின மேனதோன்றியும் etc , In another
context மகாபாரதந தமிழ்படுத்தது மதுராபுரி சங்கம வைத்
தும் etc

charge of Nanjilāṣṭu Kongaraiyan might have served in the Kongu-aadu or might have hailed from Kongu nadu. *Ayyattar* and *Nyaya paripalana perunderu* are mentioned. It was evidently a judicial body.¹⁰³ They can be compared to the District Collectors who served as the channel of communication between the king and the nadus. Many aspects of Pandyan administration system remain obscure still. Much work remains to be done in this field.

6 Taxation

Much is already known about the various taxes collected from the people like *kadamaṣ antarayam uludukkudṣ pādikkāral taltāra peltam inavarṣ, idai varṣ* etc. We have heard of *tari irai* a tax on the weavers, *paṇṇupill* a tax on cotton or textiles. A tax on pearl fishery was called *Salapattirai* collected from the Nattar of Kuda nadu.¹⁰⁴ Some special taxes like *talābhāra varṣ abhisheka-kāṁ* are mentioned to have been collected on the occasion of a festival. The king gifted these taxes to the temple.¹⁰⁵ One of the usual ways by which the king showed his benefaction either to a temple or to a distinguished service or scholar was to make tax free gift of land. In times of drought tax exemptions were freely made. Tax evasion was often punished with confiscation of land and property and making it to the local temple. The people showed their protest by migrating to other places.

There are instances of the Sabha expressing concern about heavy taxation. Once, on account of the rise in taxes the Sabha had to cut its contribution to the local temple. Usually in any assessment or re-assessment of land tax, the *Nattars*, the *Ur* and the *Sabha* were consulted and taken into confidence. Land tax was the main source. Only cultivated lands were taxed according to their *taram*. During the time of Vira Pandya (13th century A.D.) on each *ma* 1/4 *kṣṇ* and 1 *kalams* of paddy was levied as tax.¹⁰⁶ Instances of heavy taxation are available. As the villagers could not pay during the time of Maravarman Sundara II his officer revised the taxes on taxable lands.

103. 91 of 1933

104. 43 of 1933

105. 1141 p. 72-3

106. 193/33 p. 74-5

after re-surveying with 18 ft. pole, and exempted the uncultivated lands ¹⁶⁷

7 Land Measures and Other Measures

There was a good land-survey system. Lands were measured by certain standard - measures like 24 feet *kōl*, 18 feet *kōl* etc., and they were also periodically changed. During the time of Maravarman Sundara I a new lineal measure called *kudi-tāngi* which measured 24 span in length was introduced in the place of the older rod which measured only 18 spans. With this new measure, the lands were surveyed and taxes re-assessed, under the orders of Kalavayil-nādālvān who communicated it to the Nattars ¹⁶⁸

Again during the reign of his successor Jatavarman Kulasekhara I, the measure *kudi-tāngi* was again increased by 1/4 of its length by the orders of the same chieftain ¹⁶⁹

During Maravarman Kulasekhara's time the measuring rod was called *Aiulniti* ¹⁷⁰. Later records mention the measure *Sundara-pandyan-kōl* ¹⁷¹ of 24 feet length and another *Virā-Pandyan kōl* ¹⁷² of 18 feet. Thus 18 and 24 feet seem to have been the basic standard though they underwent slight increase or decrease and they were named after the ruling kings.

8 Coins

Though numerous coins have been discovered in Pandyanadu, they are mostly of late period and some non-descript and difficult for classification because of the lack of legends. Particularly, early coins are indeed rare. The rectangular or square copper coins with double fish on one side and the elephant surrounded by the *ashtamangalas* are probably the earliest and they are rightly ascribed to the Sangam period. They are exactly like their counterparts of the early Cholas of the same period. Though they are ubiquitous and found in baskets in

167 715 of 1962-63

168 1936-37, p. 74

169 329 of 1959-60

170 48 of 1928-29

171 521 of 1962-63

172 715

the Vaigai bed none of them has any legend on them. But variations in their size, shape and the symbols may perhaps indicate the various denominations. The coin *anai-achchu* referred to in the inscription might be a reference to this elephant coin. Some gold coins with fish but without any legend have been ascribed to the Pandyas. From Sangam literature we learn *Kānam kāsū* etc., were gold coins. It would indeed be a great discovery if we could find early coins with the Brahmi letters. There is every likelihood of this.

Regarding the Pandyas of Kadungon line we get a reference to the coin named *Avanipasekharan-Galaga* which was a copper coin issued probably by Srīmaran Sri Vṛllabhn who had the title *Avanipasekharā*.¹⁷³ In the records of Varaguna II we get reference to *kāsu* and *paḷan kāsu*.¹⁷⁴ Recently a round gold coin of Varaguna II (Acc. A D 862) has been identified in the collection at the National Museum, New Delhi. It has two carps vertically placed on one side and on the reverse is found in clear bold grantha characters the name *Sri Varaguna* in one straight line. Varaguna's lavish endowment to the Tiruchendur temple included 1400 gold *kāsus* and his endowment to Ambasamudram included 290 gold *kāsus*. Another record mentions that one gold *kāsu* was one *Paḷanju* in weight.¹⁷⁵ There is the other type of gold coins, the Pandya Dhananjaya coins with fish on the obverse and the legend *Sri Pandya Dhanajaya* on reverse in Nagari Characters. It is doubtful if these were Pandyan imperial issues.¹⁷⁶ An early 9th century Pandyan record mentions *dīnāras* and *kāsus* were endowed to a temple.¹⁷⁷ The *dīnāras* were current in Pandyan country in the 14th century also since Wissaf mentions it as coins of red gold.¹⁷⁸ The early ones were evidently the imported Roman gold coins which were widely current in South India as the one mentioned in Ikṣvaku inscription. They were valued for the bullion content.

I have collected from the inscriptions a few variety of coins that were current during the 10th century.

173 Dr. Sachari *S. Indian coins* PL III C5

174 ART 1932-29 p. 66

175 R. Varaj *Gold coins of Pandya* JNSI XXXII pt. I

176 I. I. XXI No. 17

177 R. Varaj *id.*

178 R. Varaj *id.* p. 17

1. *achchu* Referred to in many inscriptions of the 10th century in the records of Solan-talai-konda Vira Pandya ¹⁷⁹ We do not know the value but a later record says $1\frac{1}{2}$ achchu is equal to 102 panam

2 *ānai-achchu* — 6th year of Jatavaraman Sri Vallabha S I I XIV No 212

3 *Kāsu* or *sempōn kāsu* and *panam* (*Ibid*, 533 and 244) From Varaguna's record we learn that $10 \text{ pon} = 1 \text{ kāsu} = 1 \text{ kalanju}$ of gold (No 231)

4 *Palankāsu* the old *kāsu* was of greater value For endowing one or two lamps 3 *palankasus* would do, whereas for the same purpose 1000 current *kāsus* were needed

5 *Drahmam*, One old *kāsu* = $1\frac{1}{2}$ drahmam (No 243)

6 *Kānam* = 1 *pon*

In later inscriptions besides the general term *kāsus*, *panam*, *palankāsu* etc, we come across the following names

7. *Pudu kulugai panam* current in Jatavarman Vira Pandya's record at Madurai (273 of 1941-42)

8. *Danapālan-kulugai* — Same king — current in Tirunelveli district (54 of 1944-45)

9 *Anrada narpudu kāsu* — Same king

10. *Palam-Soliyakkāsu* — Same king

11 *Vira-Pandyan kāsu* (*Ibid*),

12 *Palamudal-ānai-achhu* — Maran Sundara's time, 22 veli and 6 ma of land obtained for 55 *palamudal anai-achhu* (312 of 1949-50)

13 *Ellan Talayāna*

Coins of Jatavarman Sundara with legends such as *Kāliyugarāman*, *kachivalangum-ṣṛumāl* etc, are well known to us. Similarly, later coins with legends like *Samara kōlāhalan*, *Bhuvanaka vīran* are also known The latter was an issue by Maravarman Kulasekhara I His son Jatavar-

man Sundara III issued the coin bearing the legend *Kodandarāman*. A record dated *kollam* 589 i.e. A.D. 1413 mentions a coin issued by a Tirunelveli Perumal Vira Pandyan named *Nemem Kaliyuga Raman*.⁸⁰ The place name *Nemem* prefixed probably indicates that it was minted at this place. The same coin mentioned in a later record also dates *Kollam* 733 = A.D. 1558.⁸¹

Some coins of foreign origin also found their way into Pandyanadu. We have already mentioned about the presence *dinaras* as early as 9th century if not earlier. The *Drahman* was another. Besides these, the Roman gold and silver coins were possessed for their metal value but never current as coins. Coins from Ceylon were familiar here and they were called *Ilakkasu*. Ceylon Coin *kaha-pana* issued by Parakrama Bahu was ordered to be current in Pandyan country when the Ceylon king invaded Madurai against Kulasekaran.

Public Works

Government took interest in fostering agriculture by affording irrigational facilities. This took mainly two forms — either digging a channel from a nearby river or excavating a lake with sluice. Selivan Sendan excavated a channel and built a sluice.⁸² During Srimāran Sri Vallabha's time his general Etti Sattan of Iruppaikudi did extensive irrigation works. He improved tanks called *Tirumāl ēri*, *Maran-ēri* in the arid tract.

An officer of Vikrama Pandya dug a channel and built a sluice for it to carry the water from river Iennai for irrigating the lands of Tiruvannamalai.⁸³

At Silaiman near Madurai an inscription of Kulasekhara dated S. 1134 (= A.D. 1212) mentions that the Manābharana Mūvēndavār of Kappalur an officer excavated a channel called Tyāganchiriyā pērāru from the river Vaigai.⁸⁴

100 725 of 1907-08. Mint is mentioned as *Ker la-ut* at the top of the coin. ARE 1913-14 p. 104-5.

101 307 of 1903-4 p. 111.

102 1904-5 p. 102.

103 700 of 1934-35.

104 333 of 1951-52.

An epigraph of 11th century from Kuruvithurai (Nilakkottai taluk) mentions *Parakrama Pandyan Kallanai*, *Vira-Pandian-kūl*, *Sri Vallaba pēreru* *Parakrama-Pandya Perāru* is also mentioned.¹⁰⁶ Vasudevan (under Sivallabha) repaired the channel and named it *Vāsudevappērār*

Besides rivers and channels, tank irrigation was widely popular. Madakkulam, near Madurai figures in many ancient records. We hear of *Parāntaka-pērēru* near Uggiankottai. The local sabhas had *erivariyam* to look after the maintenance of the lake, -strengthening of the bund in rainy days etc.

10 Conclusion

The foregoing facts are only glimpses of the Pandyan administrative system. There is scope for considerable work in this field, especially because of the epigraphical records are enormous now. But even the glimpses given above give us the impression of the soundness of this administrative system. Though it was a monarchy, it was regulated by code of law and *dharma*. Monarchs were all enlightened and properly advised by the highly educated and cultured Uttaramantrins. The military generals were not merely soldiers but also intellectuals. The state was not functioning in the ivory tower. There was a continuous dialogue between the administration and the people in whose welfare the kings took a keen interest. The stone records of the times are full of royal concessions, and exemptions, land-donations etc., to various sections of the society and cultured institutions. Names like *Madappuram*, *Pallichandam* (land grant for Jain establishment), *Devadānam* *Tiruvidayattam* (tax free gift lands to the temples) *Tiruppanippuram* grants for the repairs and renovations to the religious establishments, *kūttu-kāni* (lands assigned to the artistes) *Pulamatuvittu* (gifts for scholars), *Battavittu* etc would all go to show how the monarchs gave sustenance and encouragement to educational, cultural and religious institutions. They honoured the military commanders with title *Enadi* and gave land-grants. They were constantly in touch with the countryside through the sabhas, the Urs and the Nattars without whose endorsement they did not do any drastic changes in the land revenue and other vital matters. There was considerable scope for local self-government by the village assemblies which practically looked after all

their day to day affairs without external interference and that the assembly not only represented all local interests but also was composed of qualified persons. As the Manur record says, the Sabhas were *Makkal-Sabhas* but regulated by certain qualifications of character and discipline. Similarly the central Government with the enlightened king at the apex, ably assisted by qualified Uttaramantrins, Nādālvans etc. was a source of strength and stability. The Pandyan monarchy was rooted in the popular will of the people. Hardly we come across any tyrannical ruler. Though we do get instances of race for power and a few succession disputes, they are extremely few considering the length of their rule. In fact, in their copper plates each takes pride in mentioning his predecessor and his achievements in the political and cultural spheres. There is no evidence to show that there was ever a tyrant among the Pandyas. The emphasis was on the welfare and good administration. Stability and efficient administration at the centre and local initiative at the village level and a good co-ordination between these two levels contributed to the success and soundness of the administration. It was an enlightened monarchy with the welfare of the people as its ideal.

LECTURE II

SOCIAL AND CULTURAL ASPECTS

1 FORMATION OF SETTLEMENT AND COLONISATION

In Pandyanadu, the fertile plains of Tambraparani had attracted human settlement more than other parts. The next focus centre was on the banks of the Vaigai. Other arid parts of Madurai and Ramanathapuram districts did not afford facilities for any large scale habitation. That is why, comparatively speaking, we do not find such a concentration of the Brahmadeya villages and temples as we get in the districts of Thanjavur and Tiruchi. From the Pandyan records, we come to understand, however, that there was a conscious attempt by the Pandyan kings to attract the Brahmins to come and settle down in different parts of their realm for which they were given lavish Brahmadeya villages, or Chaturvedimangalams, tax-exemptions etc. Similarly, the Pandyan kings tried to attract the trading community also so that commerce would grow. Thurston in his "Castes and Tribes" has recorded the tradition that about Kali 3808 a Pandyan king named Sundara Pandya asked the Chola king to induce some Vaisyas to settle down in the Pandyan country. They settled down in the country north of the Vaigai river, east of Piranmalai and south of Vellar.

An inscription of Maravarman Sundara also mentions the settlement of the Rajanārāyanapuram branch of Nagarattar community ¹

Brahmadeya

Several instances of the kings inviting the Brahmins to settle down in different places and giving them lands for the purpose are recorded.

Kattarimangalam in Tiruchendur taluk was ordered by Vikrama Pandya to be called as Vikrama Pandya Chaturvedimangalam and 64 Brahmins well versed in the *Vedas* and sastras were settled down there ²

A record of the same king from Tiruppachetty refers to the formation of a new colony of 46 Malayala Brahmins from Malaimandalam

1 ARE 1935-36 p 80

2 377 of 1929-30

This was done because the population of the village had become much decimated and this was represented to the king. He arranged for reorganisation of the village and settling of the Malayala Brahmins of the neighbouring district. For this, the village was marked out, lands measured, necessary channels dug and sluices built and house sites and lands were apportioned to the new colonists. A temple was also built and it was called Malaimandala Vinnagar Alvar.³

A number of *agarams* founded by Jatavarman Sundara (Acc. A D 1303) who had the title 'Kodandrama' are recorded. In South Arcot region lands were sold to the Brahmins and their *agaram* was called Kodandarama Chaturvedimangalam after the king. The lands were purchased from *Bhramiputturar* or Nattumakka] who had enjoyed the tenancy rights of the village and who were all Vellalas and who formed the body — *Chutramēli* — *Periandāllār*.⁴ This example however would show the creation of Brahmadeyas was done with the endorsement of the agricultural community who had the tenancy rights of the lands.

Vānādarayan Kālingarayan an important minister under Māra varman Kulasekhara I established several *agraharams* at different places and built temples for the memory of the king.⁵

Avanivendarāman Chaturvedimangalam in Ayakkudi was formed in the name of the king in Vaigainādu by settling 128 Brahmins. Land was made tax free.⁶

During the time of Jatavarman Sundara (Ac 1261) a new village was founded by clubbing a few together and settling in them a number of Brahmins. It was to be called Sundara Pandya Chaturvedi mangalam. 200 *velis* of lands were distributed to 121 Brahmins who were teachers of *vedas* and also others like the *landiya* accountant, carpenter, black smith, *u-ackhas* barber and wife *vettayan* etc. Provision was also made for a grazing ground, crematorium etc.⁷

3 1928-29 p. 1169

4 1935-37 p. 77-78

5 1917-20

6 1933-34 II

7 ARE 1935-36 p. 18

Another record mentions the foundation of the villages called Avani-muladudaiyal-Chaturvedimangalam and Bhuvanamulududaiyal-Chaturvedimangalam, apparently after the queens of the Pandya kings ⁸

The newly formed villages were around the temple and had facilities of water, cultivable lands etc.

2 CIVIC AMENITIES IN THE VILLAGES AND TOWNS *

Interesting is the reference to street lights on the roads. There were separate streets for different classes of society. *Nānādesipperunderu* would show they were occupied by the merchant class. *Sāliyar-teru* is mentioned as the quarters for weavers

Water-sheds

A record from Dalapadisamudram mentions the provision made for street lights and also for the maintenance of two persons to look after the water-sheds called *Rājākkar-tannīrpandal* and another called *Munnūrruavperunpandal*, presumably after the guild or regiment of 300 persons. To open water-sheds at convenient intervals along the important highways was a popular form of benefaction in the olden days

Merchant community

As pointed out earlier, the early Tamil Brahmi inscriptions themselves contain evidence of merchants and merchant guilds doing benefactions to the monastic resorts. There was a guild at Vellarai near Madurai called *Nigamattor* ¹⁰. In later epigraphs we get very good evidence for the active part played by the merchant organisations like *Nānādesis*, *Mamgrāmattar*, *Ainūrruvar* etc. We get evidence of the merchant and artisan people colonising in different parts along the east coast. A 10th century record from Sirudavur in Chingleput district registers donation for a Vishnu temple from a merchant from Pandya-mandala. A 14th century record also refers to the colony of settlers ¹¹. In Chingleput district itself places like Chintamani, Mylapur, Tiruvot-

⁸ *Ibid*

⁹ 1928-29, p. 67

¹⁰ I. Mahadevan *Corpus op cit*

¹¹ ARE, 1933-34, p. 35

tiyur Tiruvadandai Mahabalipuram all on the sea-coast were great centres of commercial activity as could be judged from the inscription of these places. The big temples in the tract could be built and maintained only owing to the philanthropy of the thriving mercantile population

Ariviyur near Sivapuri was called Desi Uyyavanadān pattanam and it was a place of some commercial importance. There was in it a street named *Nānādesippperunderu*. A number of merchants figure as donors to the local tank here.¹² Early inscriptions at Uggirankottai mention the benefactions to the temple made by the Nagarattar the pre-eminent merchant community of Pandyanādu.¹³ They built a corridor in the local Siva temple and it was named *Nagarattar Tiruchurralai*.

A record of Māravarmān Sundara (13th century) from Pillaiyarpattu in Ramanathapuram district gives interesting information about the Nagarattar community. It speaks about the origin of Rajanārayanapuram branch of the Nagarattar.¹⁴ It states that the Nagarattar settled in *Ainūrruppperunderu* in Erukankudi and purchased some lands at Marudangudi for founding a new colony called Rajanāyanapuram. It was one of the nine places where the present Nattukottai Chettvars colonised in the Pandyanādu. The present record gives the approximate date of the colonisation of one branch in the first quarter of the 13th century. The Nagarattars were in charge of a number of temples. They even had the right of collecting certain levies for certain festivals.

On the festival occasion the deity was to be heralded as *Danmaṭṭi cala an tambiran*. Evidently Pillaiyarpattu was one of the 64 *taṭṭams* or merchant communities who organised themselves as associate bodies of the *Tiṭaiyirattainnūrttar*.¹⁵ We get good many references to this body *ṭiyirattainnūrttar*, *ṭiyirattu-elenūrttar* etc. They were evidently corporate bodies comprising of leading merchants. The temple at Sivapuri was called *ṭiyirattainnūrttar-ṭṭaram Udaiyar*.¹⁶ A record of Māravarmān

12 ARE, 1920 29 p. 63 and S. I. I. XIV. 13.

13 109 of 1933-34.

14 ARE, 1933 34 p. 73.

15 ARE, 1906 11 p. 3.

16 1925 29 p. 13.

Kulasekharan I mentions a toll collected on articles of merchandise to the temple by the regional representatives of the great organisations like *Tisaiyayirāttu annūrruvar* and *Chitramēli-perianāttar*. The *manigrāmam* of Kodumbalur was one of them. Other centres of these merchant guilds were Uraiyur, Rajasekharapuram in Malainādu etc.¹⁷ Ayya-pohi was another guild that was functioning in Periakulam area.¹⁸

Prasasti of a merchant guild

Another inscription of the same king datable to A D 1318 contains an interesting *prasasti* of the *Vanianagarattar* in the 18 districts (*Padinen-Bhūmi*) on both the banks of the Kaveri. It claims all mythological associations like the Garuda, their flag, the Pampa, their river, Jayavarman, their elephant etc.¹⁹

Another record of 13th century from Kīramangalam states that the Nagarattar of several places met and agreed to provide for the daily worship and upkeep of the temple tank called the *Nānādesam* by a levy on their imports. It seems to have been a self-imposed levy for a good cause.²⁰ Another record from the same place mentions that the mercantile communities *Padinen-Vishāyattār* (of 18 districts) provided for the worship in the temple.²¹ Velangudi in Tiruppattur taluk had a merchant colony. It figures in an inscription as Vaniyanagaram and the merchant of the place had even the *padikkaval* rights. A record from this place mentions the donation of a pearl merchant of Kāliyamangalam and his name was Alagiyanayan-Valai-vīśuvān.²² For a similar purpose of renovating an old temple in Ramanathapuram district, members of 18 vishayas attended a meeting and among them, were the *Valanjiyar* of South Ceylon, *Anjuvannam* and *Manigramam*, all self regulating corporations of different classes of merchants.^{22a}

Social groups

Regarding the social set up, nothing new need be said. It was essentially an orthodox, conservative set up based on the caste system.

17 286 of 1964-65

18 S I I XIV, 251

19 1960-61, p 23

20 ARE, 1935-36, p 81

21 *Ibid*, No 162

22 503 of 1958-59

22a 598 of 1926

with all its good features and also the draw backs. We get reference, in the well known social groups Valangai and Idangai groups - which were very conscious of their rights and privileges and which represent roughly the agricultural class on one side and the industrial or the artisan class on the other. The constant rivalry between them in later history is well known. They are recorded even in Vijayanagar inscriptions. We do not know about their position in earlier times. They seem to have claimed certain amount of autonomy to have their own rules and regulations of conduct, often defying the king's orders. But the evidence is not so clear in the Paadaya records as they are in the Chola ones. However a record of Jatavarman Sri Vallabha from Tenkairai (Periakulam taluk) appears to record certain rules framed by them.²³ But the record is fragmentary and hence we are not able to understand its significance. The guild *ayyapoli* and its association with the temple is mentioned. We have already made reference to the respectable place of the agriculturists in the society. The merchant community, the artisan classes were also having their recognised importance in the village community.

Sati system

Sati system which was one of the evils of our social system does not appear to have been prevalent in Tamil country in any appreciable manner. We get indeed only rare instances. The classical instance is of Vanavan Mahadevi, the queen of Sundara Chola Parantaka II who entered fire on the death of her husband. In the *Purananuru* Perungoppendu a Pandyan queen is said to have done likewise. But, probably this was confined only to the royal class. The common folk do not appear to have practised it. But in one of the more recently discovered records from Tiruppurisvaram in Tirunelveli Dt registers a gift of an individual to the deity for the merit of his daughter who entered fire as sati.²⁴ This is one of the few such rare instances.

Refuge colonies

We get a few references to certain places called *ayyazhuvu* etc. i.e., asylum for the oppressed - the full significance of which is not known to us. Sundara Pandyanallur near Tellaru in South Arcot is

²³ S I I XIV 31

²⁴ S I I I 240

mentioned as one. Such people who probably left their original places out of some fear or oppression, were rehabilitated in the new colonies with some tax concessions. An inscription from Sucindram records the founding of a similar *anjnān-pugalidam* around the temple at Sucindram ²⁵ Quite likely, the people of the border areas crossed the borders to escape oppressive taxation. But full picture is not available. It might also be due to drought in certain areas, the people might have migrated to better areas temporarily.

Famine

A record datable to A D 1227 informs us that at Ilayangudi there was a famine in the village and in order to relieve the distress, the residents even sold some of the jewels belonging to the temple. In the next year, when normal conditions returned, they restored the ornaments to the deity ²⁶

Self immolation

Another rather repulsive system of self-immolation is recorded in South Arcot region ²⁷ But it was not popular and was only a rare happening. A male *devar-adiar* of the temple cut off his head and sacrificed his life, probably in fulfilment of a vow on the completion of the *mandapa*, which was long lying incomplete. For this act, some 1000 *kulis* of land was granted as *Udirapatti* to the sons of the deceased in grateful memory of his heroic act of self-immolation. Another type of self-immolation is reported at Tirupparankunram. During the Muslim attacks, some devotees are said to have fallen from the gopura, as a sort of expiation to keep them away from temples. But such instances were fortunately rare.

3 CULTURAL ASPECTS

Music, Dance and Learning

We have some interesting details regarding many aspects of cultural life of the people. From an inscription of the 13th century from Attur near Tirunelveli, we learn that there was a theatrical hall

25 474 of 1958-59

26 291 of 1949-50

27 197 of 1944-35

and a troupe of actors and actresses to enact dramas (*nāṭakas*) on the occasion like *Avani tirunāl*. Some lands were given as gift to the actors and actresses and such assignments were known as *kāṭṭādu-kāṇi* ** Drama is referred to as *Tirunāṭakam*, sacred drama, implying thereby that it was with a religious or puranic theme. The hall was called *Alaṅṅa paṇḍyankūdam*. Gifts to the Sāntikūttan and one actress by name Tirumēni piṇyādāl are recorded. A record of A. D 1425 from Tiruchendur speaks of gifts for dancing girls to do service by dancing during *mahapūja* and *andikkāppu* **

Two records of Māravarman Kulasekhara (Acc. 1268) from Minakshī temple at Madurai speak of endowments of land as *Jīrta* to a musician called Periyān. He was given the title *Pandya Vellānai venra pāṇḍya vāḍyamarayar*. Another record speaks of similar grant to eleven musicians of the temple. The names and number of musical instruments used by them are given as *Iramaddalam maddalam timilai semaḷ kalam, kaṇi* and *tiruchinnam* **. At Attur, Sāntikūttan is mentioned i.e. one who enacted *Sāntikūttu* a variety of dance and stage play **. There was a theatre (*nāṭakaśālā*) within the palace at Madurai **

Learned people were patronised by lavish gifts of lands and other needs. Varaguna I prided himself as *Pandita rāṣaḍa* lover of scholars. The number of Chaturvedimangalam, Brahmacharyas and Bhattacharyas recorded in the inscriptions testify to the patronage of the learned people. Gift for scholars is mentioned as *Pulamai vṛtti* **. Tax exemptions for their lands are recorded. Every king boasts that he created many Brahmadeya and performed so many *yajnas*. Selvan Sendan for example, declares that he performed so many *Hiranyasrabhas Tulābhara* etc. Similar claims we get in Velvikudi and other records. These would show also their unshakable faith in the orthodox Hindu rituals. Almost all the Pandyan copper plates were issued in favour of the learned people. The Sivakasi grant was for Vasudeva Bhattachan in appreciation of his composition of a prasasti in the *anūstūp*. The plate

** 411 and 413 of 1939-30

** 3 of 1917-20

30 1937-40 p. 47

31 S I I N V a. 17

3 B I 254

33 71 (1939-33)

calls Madurai as Tamilkkūdal, clearly supporting the tradition that it was a great seat of Tamil learning — where Tamil poets met, vying for recognition. Srimaran Sri Vallabhan honoured one Etti Sattan with the title *Iruppaikkudi-Kilavan* who was a descendant of a poet who adorned the Sangaphalagai at Madurai ³⁴ One Sēnavaraiyar figured as an important officer in the 13th century records from Parantakanallur. Was he the same as the Senavaraiyar, commentator of *Tolkāppiam*? ³⁵ The Dalavaypuram plates inform us that the father of the scribe was a Tamil poet named Pāndi-Tamilābharanan. The Tamil portion of this grant begins with the words ஓங்கு திரையின பரப்பில which is also the opening line of the Sangam classic *Madurai Kāṇṇi* dedicated to Nedunjelīyan. Some of the terms occurring in this copper plates are reminiscent of Periālvār's references to the Pandyas. For example, compare the epithet “கடல கடைநது அமிரது கொண்டு of the plate with கடல கடைநது அமிரதம் கொண்டு கலசத்தை நிறைத்தால போல of Periālvār. Similarly, Periālvār's reference to the Pandyas' greatness as “பருப்பதத்து கயல பொறித்த பாண்டிய குலபதி போல” is echoed in the inscriptions.

Colleges and Libraries

Some evidences are available for the existence of some *Ghatikas* or colleges for higher learning. From literary sources we know that Madurai itself was a centre of learning just as Kanchi was. In South India, certain institutes called *Sālais* and *Ghatikas* served as places where pupils were imparted training not only in the ancient lore like the *Vedas* etc., but also certain military disciplines. The well known example was *Kāṇḍalūr-Sālai* in the Āy country, which was a sort of military training college besides imparting other academic studies. Similarly, at Parthipasekharapuram, there seems to have been another institute. In the inscriptions of early Pandyan kings, all important Chief Ministers like Māran Kāri, Māran Eyin, Sāmantan Ganapati, Sāttan Sāttan were well versed in the military as well as literary and religious pursuits and most of them hailed from Karuvendapuram or Ugkarankottai. It is likely that there was one *Sālai* situated there. There was a College at Kanyakumari

34 334 of 1929-30

35 *Ibid*, p 78

named Srivallabha perunjālai as an adjunct to the temple. It was evidently founded by a Pandyan king or his Ay feudatory. Later on it was renamed as *Rājarājaperum Sālai* by Rajaraja I. Lands were endowed for the institution as *Sālābhogam*. There was provision for 50 Sattars to stay and study there. (E. I. XXVI 37)

A record of Jotāvarman from Chingleput district mentions a *Ghatika* at Kāvanur in Sengāttu-Kōttom **

Library

A record of Jātāvarman Sundara of Chidambaram speaks of a Saraswati Bhandāram (library) its organisation and administration under the orders of a chief Pallavadaraiyar. The library was originally formed by a poet Svamīdeva and now it was expanded. A list of 20 scholars proficient in different branches of learning were employed to copy down in Sanskrit and Tamil and compare and check the manuscripts.³⁷

These data clearly show the interest evinced in those times to maintain libraries with facilities for copying important works. One of the works mentioned is *Siddhāntaratnākara* by Somesvara.

We have evidence for another Saraswati Bhandāra in the temple at Sermadevi and the grant of land for the recitation of the *vedas* and *puranas* therein.

Mathas

Next to temples *mathas* or seminaries were centres of religion and learning. They belonged to different sects and affiliations and were recipients of gifts from kings and people. But mostly we get much information about Saivite *mathas*. A rather long epigraph of Maran Sundara II states that the king provided for the recitation of *Tirum jnānam* in the temple at Tirunelveli by as many as eleven *śāpas* who were the disciples of several important pontifical heads of *mathas* in South India.³⁸ They were —

37 St of 193 33

37 ARE 19147

33 C5 of 1916

37 47 of 1921 20

- 1 Viṣhakanthadēva-Santāna ,
- 2 Bhattavira-Santāna ,
- 3 Tīruvārur-matha ,
- 4 Bhiksha-matha ;
- 5 Matha at Madurai ;
- 6 Alagīanāyaka-Santan at Tīrunelveli.

Representatives of all the *mathas* recited the *Tīruyanānam* which was probably a sacred work of the Śiva-siddhanta school ⁴⁰

At Tīruppattur, in the east street adjoining the temple, there was the *Bhiksha-matha*, presided over by Sarvesvara This is mentioned in a record of Vira Pandya (A D 1281) ⁴¹ The origin of this *matha* is not known but in later times its connection with pontiffs like Aghora Śivāchārya and Isāna Śivachārya suggest a possible connection with the Śiva-Siddhantha teachers of the same name The *Bhikshamatha* is also mentioned in a later record of the 16th century A D in association with Golakī-dharma The disciples were in charge of some temples in South India including Pandyanadu ⁴²

At Aruviyur near Sīvapurai (Tīrunelveli district) a merchant constructed a *matha* during the time of Srivallabha ⁴³ At Tīrupparan-kunram, there was the *Kilai-matha* for which Vikrama Pandya gave some grant ⁴⁴ At Tīrunelveli in later half of the 13th century, during the reign of Maran Sundara II one Māmāṭṭi of the king constructed a *matha* called Seyyanampiratti-matha, after her own name She was probably the queen of Hoysala Somēśvara who was the *mama* of the king One Tamil Pallavarayar was the local chief ⁴⁵ At Tikkurungudi, there was *Kalaiyarkalan-tirumandapam* for which a tax-free land was given as *madappuram* during Jatāvarman Sundara's period ⁴⁶ At Sāk-kottai (Ramanathapuram district), during the reign of the same king there was *matha* presided over by Bhavitachariyar Dakshinamurti for

40 Another reference to this work cf 463 also.

41 173 of 1929-30, p. 82

42 178 of 1929-30 ,

43 1928-29, p. 68

44 248 of 1941-42

45 298 of 1940-41,

46 407 of 1954-55

whom the assemblies of village and nadu gave lands as *Tirumadarilagam* ⁴⁷ At Madurai there was one *Bhuranakam-ran-matha* for which a royal grant for feeding 1000 pilgrims at the rate of 100 daily during festival days, was given ⁴⁸ At Sermadevi we get some evidence for its association with Kashmir Saivites Several natives from Kashmir *desam* and *Aryadesam* figure in records ⁴⁹ At Kuttalam *Pāṣṣata-makkal* were in charge of the temple. ⁵⁰

Vaishnava-mathas

In the 12th 14th century period quite a few *Sri Vaishnava mathas* came up in all important centres like Tirupati Srirangam Kārchī presided over by ascetics called *Jiyars* Some of them trace back their origin to the times of Ramanuja and some even earlier (e.g. Srirangam) The *Jiyars* were the custodians of worship and ritual in the temple It was their duty to see that the *pūjas* were done in accordance with the code laid down by Ramanuja.

At Alagarkoil there was a *matha* named *Tirunāḍudaiyar matha* for feeding Tridandi Sanyāsin and Ekāṅgi *Sri Vaishnavas* ⁵¹

There was also another *matha* named *Fulasakthara-matha* in the same temple for which land was given as royal grant ⁵²

At Tirukkuringudi there was the *Tirumangai matha* for the tridandi ascetics for which tax free land gift was made by a Pandyan king ⁵³

At Alvar Tirunagari there was the *Arulala Idan matha* to provide facilities for scholars It is stated to have been founded by Tiru kkurugur Mahāmuniṅgal (Nammajvar) during the time of Maravarman Sundarā (13th century) ⁵⁴ The famous Vānamāmalai *matha* came up much later i.e., after Manavala Mahamuni But *mathas*

47 52 of 1946-47

48 73 of 1937-40

49 S. I. C. N. V. No. 197

50 *Id. 66*

51 77 of 1937-40

52 27

53 33 of 1940

54 23 of 1940

listed above were of earlier period. The pontiffs of these *mathas* had their main object in regularising the worship and rituals in the temple in accordance with Śrī Vaiṣṇava tenets, of affording spiritual initiation and training to their disciples, in providing facilities of feeding etc., to the scholars and pilgrims on festive occasions. To that extent, they were doing social service besides ministering to the religious aspirations of the people. They were often centres of intellectual and literary pursuits. It was in the *mathas* at Śrīrangam that eminent scholars like Nampillai, Peria-vāchan-pillai, Manavala Mahamuni were nurtured.

Religion

Jainism and Buddhism had their limited following in Pandyanadu from the Sangam age. The early caves with Brahmi inscriptions found in and around Madurai and other part of Tirunelveli and Ramanathapuram districts were probably the *pālis* of the Jain ascetics, who performed the Sallekhana fasting for 56 days and finally gave up life. We get a good number of names⁵⁵ of these ascetics such as

- 1 *Kāṇyananta āsiryar* Occupied the monastery at Māngulam. Nedunchelian's officer and brother-in-law made gifts to this monastery.
- 2 Kavuti Iten Sittannavassal
- 3 Aruti of Elaiyan lived at Karungālakkudi
- 4 Nātan, lived in the dormitory at Kunrattur
- 5 Kāsapan, occupied the cave at Alagarkoil
- 6 Cenkāyapan, an ammanan from Yarrūr, lived in the cave at Pugalūr
7. Cenkāyapan - occupied the cave at Tiruchi
8. Cantiranti - did penance at Tirupparankunram.
9. Matavirai, the great nun living at Alagarkoil cave
10. a nun of Sapamita ... at Alagarkoil cave

All the above names suggest that they belonged to the Jain faith which laid emphasis on renunciation, fasting etc. But Jainism received rude shock from the Hindu revivalist movement led by Āṭvars and Nāyan-

55 I. Mahadevan, *op. cit.*

mans. All the *Tevaram* hymnists visited Paandyaañdu and particularly Sambandar's influence on Ninnasār Nedumśran gave a fillip to Saivism. Similarly, among the Ālvārs, Nammālvār and his disciple Madhura kavi Peria ālvār and his daughter Ādāī were born in Pandyanādu and had a large hand in spreading the tenets of Vaishnavism. Nedunjadayan Parāntaka was a great devotee of Vishnu and his minister Madurakavi (probably Madura Kavi Alvar) excavated a stone cave temple for Narasimha at Anaimalai in the same hill in which Jains had their resorts. This was symbolic of the triumph of Hinduism over the heterodox religions. An inscription of the 7th century recently discovered at Malayadikkuruchi by Sri K. R. Srinivasan makes a pointed reference to the conversion of a Jain cave temple into a Saiva one. According to him temple movement of Hinduism took two forms — either converting the existing Jain caves into Saiva ones or excavating new cave temples. The words used for conversion were *Tiruttivitta*, *padakkī* etc. Similarly the inscription of 773 A. D. Tirupparankuadram cave also seems to make a veiled reference to conversion of the existing Jain temple for the Saiva one. It states that Sattan Ganapati reappropriated the cave *திருத்துவித்தது திருக்கோயிலும் சீர்தராமும்*. The term *Tiruttivitta* has rightly been taken as remodelled corrected 'reformed' or converted.

All this would show that Jainism was fast losing its influence and Saivism and Vaishnavism were gaining the upper hand. But it continued to have a limited following among the certain sections like the merchant-class. Many Pandyan kings claim in their inscriptions that they gave numerous (*Enniranda Pallichandam*) endowments to Jain temples. In certain localities or pockets, Jainism continued to flourish with a limited following. A number of their resorts in Pandyanadu have Jain sculptures and inscriptions in Vatteluttu characters of 8th-9th century. A few examples are Anaimalai Kazhugunimalai Arimamalai Samanamalai Karadippattu Sittannavaial. All the 8th-10th century Jain settlements also gravitated towards the same areas or hills where the early Jain ascetics lived. The later resorts have *Vatteluttu* inscriptions written below the sculpture of Jain Tirthankara. The most famous Jain teacher was Vjjanandi. Probably he is the same one who is referred to in the *Jirakakandamari*. He is mentioned in the newly discovered *vatteluttu* inscription at Arutapattu and also at places at Eruvadi Uttamapalayam etc.

Sittannavāsai This was another Jain pocket which continued to flourish even in the mediaeval times. An inscription of 9th century found in one of the pillars of the cave refers to a Jain teacher of Madurai by name Ilam Gautaman (*Madurai-āsiriya*) made some renovations here. It was during the reign of Srimāra Sri Vallabha (815-862 A D) ⁵⁶

Samanar hill Near Madurai, was another Jain settlement about which we get some new evidence now. A Tamil inscription of 10th century near the Jain images mentions a *palli* and the ascetics Guna-bhadrādēva and Chandraprabha. ⁵⁷ This *palli* continued to be there even later.

A Kannada record of the 12th century from the same place mentions the Jain teachers, one of whom was Bālachandradēva of Sravanabelagola who belonged to the Mūlasangha ⁵⁸. The connection of a Jain teacher of Sravanabelagola, the well known Jain centre of Karnataka with the ancient Jain centre at Samanarmalai near Madurai is of special interest. It mentions other ascetics like Nemidēva, Ajitasēnadēva, Gōvardhanadēva etc.

Tirunelveli district A Jain temple Nyāyaparipāla-perumpalli in the Tidiyurmala at Pulam in Tirunelveli district is recorded. The hill was also called *Jinagirimalai*. There are some sculptures of Jain Tirthankaras. But later it seems to have been converted into Bhagavati temple ⁵⁹.

Iruppaikudi (Ramanathapuram district) .

In the 9th century one important chief of Srimara Sri Vallabha by name Iruppaikudi Kilavan built a Jain *palli* besides Siva and Vishnu temples ⁶⁰.

While Jainism showed remarkable adjustability in facing the storm of Hindu revivalism, Buddhism practically succumbed to it. Particularly, the Pandyanādu, not a trace was to be found, still in

56 325 - 326 of 1960-61,

57 242 of 1950 51

58 244 of 1950 51,

59 1939-40, Pt II

60 1929-30, p 71

the Chola country places like Nāgapattinam Bhūtamangalam Kaveripumpattinam etc. there were atleast stray Buddhist colonies. There was the famous Sulāmanī vihāra or Rājarāja perumpallī established by the Sri Vijaya king and also patronised by Rājarāja. But his son Rajendra was rather hostile to it. We do not hear much about it later.

Recently in a Pandyan record of 15th century from Nagapattinam, we get some interesting data about this famous Buddhist colony. It records the gift of some lands belonging to Siva temple for the renovation (*Tiruppani*) of Rājarājaperumpallī *alias* SriMāhasvara perumpallī.¹ From this, it appears that the old Buddhist establishment had been converted into a Saivite one by this time. The other interpretation would be that some lands belonging to the Siva temple were gifted for the renovation of the ancient Buddha paṭṭi.

Apart from this, we hear next to nothing about Buddhism.

Saivism and Vaishnavism

The patronage and encouragement given to those two wings of Hinduism by the Pandyan king hardly needs any emphasis. They extended the whole hearted and impartial support to the Vedic religions from very early days. They had a long tradition as champions of Vedic religion. Even the Pandyas of the Sangam age claim the performance of yāgas (e.g. Palyāgasālai Mudukudumi Peruvalludi). When the Kalabras occupied Pandyanādu and disturbed the existing religious conditions, Hinduism received a set back. But again with the coming of Pandyas in the 6th-7th centuries the Vedic religion regained its place of honour with added vigour. The Velvilkudi grant gives beautiful expression to this. *வேளவீச சாலை குடி கின்று வேளவீச குடி வேள நம்புகிறவசே வேளநடுகுளத்தே வேளநதி*. The Kalabras cancelled all concessions and land grants given to the Vedic people by the early Pandyas and the later Pandyan kings restored them to all their original donors. Not only this. In every grant they pride themselves in saying that they performed the Vedic rites like the *Atimela Hiranyasūta* *śukla yajna* etc. This can be seen in Selan Sendan's Varnai

bed inscription also Maravaram Sundara I gives expression to the same ideal in his *mykarti* wherein he says that he encouraged

மூவகை தமிழ் முறைமையின விளங்க
நாலவகை வேதமும் நனினறுடன வளர
ஐவகை வேளையுஞ் செயலின யியற்ற
அறுவகைச்சமயமும் அழகுடன திகழ
எழுவகைப் பாடலு மியலுடன பரவ ...

This sums up their ideals and aspirations

Their impartiality between Saivism and Vaishnavism is seen in all their copper plates which usually begin with the invocatory verses to Vishnu, and end with a tribute to Lord Siva. Particularly, among the early Pandyas there were both followers of Saivism and Vaishnavism. While Nīnrasīr Nedumāran was a Saivite, Nedunjadaya Parāntaka I c, Varaguna I called himself *Parama Vaishnavavanum tādāgi*. Similarly, Srimāran Sri Vallabha, the contemporary of Periālvār was a Vaishnava while his son Varaguna II was a devout Saiva. His brother Parāntaka Vīra Nārāvana was possibly a Vaishnava again. We get the impression that sectarianism had no place in their conception of Hinduism. The lavish patronage to the temple of both denominations testify to their eclectic outlook. Even the tinge of fanaticism that was seen in some of the later Chola kings is not seen here. The later Pandyas of the Second empire were most of them Saivites but extended their patronage to all temples. Jatūvaraman Sundara's benefactions to Srīrangam and Chidambaram are historic and are too well known. Minakshī Amman temple Madurai, Nellaiappar temple, Tirunelveli, Jambukesvaram at Tiruchī, Chidambaram temple among the Saivite temples, Srīrangam, Alagarkōil Srivilliputtūr, Aḷvār Tirunagarī among the Vaishnava temples, received ample patronage.

Their patronage took place in many ways, huge land grant, tax exemption, institution of *sandis*, renovation of existing temples and most important, construction of huge towers or gopuras and mandapas which remain to this day as magnificent monuments of Pandyan art. *Avanvēnda Rāman-Tirugōpuram* in the Minakshī temple, *Sundara Pāndya gōpuram* at Chidambaram, *Tirunirru gōpuram* at Jambukesvaram are outstanding examples ⁶² At Alagarakōil, Jatavarman Sundara

built a *mandapa* called *Kōyil pon-meinda-perumal mandapa* ** At Srirangam, he built the *Sēraṇai tenrān Tirumadapa*.** *Kal-chitrai vidī* in the same temple is called *Kaṭiyugārāman tiruvīdī* **. Sundara Pandyan Tirumandapam at Minakshi temple **. A gopura of the same name is mentioned at the Vishnu temple at Srivaikuntam. ** A number of *Sandis* or offerings on the birth days of the kings are known. At the Vishnu temple at Sivaramangai Jatavarman Kulasekhara instituted a service named *Kulasekhara-Sandi* on his birth star

Araṇi-vēnda-Rāman-sandi in Minakshi temple instituted by Jatavarman Sundara II on his birth star Uttarattadi. Sundara I on his natal star Mula and Sundara III on his birth star Pushya **

Rājakkal nāyan-Sandi performed at Vishnu temple Tiruvendipuram on Vaikasi-hasta, the birth-star of Māravarman Vikrama Pandya (Acc. 1283). He performed another on his coronation day Rohini and called it *Vikrama-Pandyan-Sandi* **

The Pandyan queens did not lag behind in this race for beneficence. We get a reference to *Ulagamuludaiyāl-Sandi* in the temple of Tiruvannāmalai (South Arcot) during the time of Vikrama Pandya (1283). Vira Pandya's queen gave valuable presents to Siva temple at Tiruvattiyur (in North Arcot) such as gold ornaments like the *pattam Ganga* and the crescent to Natarāja in her own name **. Another form of encouragement was by setting up the images of the deity and also the saints like the Nayanmars and Alvars. In one of the more recently found inscriptions, we get a reference to the installation of the image of Tiruppurumturai Aludaiyar in the temple of Tirukkodika **. During Maravarman Sundara I's reign the image of saint Sundaramurti and his consort Parvati Nāchiar were installed in the Siva temple at

63 ARE 1978-29 p. 69-70

64 28 of 193-30

65 98 of 1936-37

66 785 of 1937-40

67 379 of 1939-40

68 137 of p. 7-8

69 247 of 1935-6

70 2253 of 1937-40 Al o 17

71 34 of 1930-31

Tentirupperai ⁷² In the Viṣṇu temple in the same place a mandapam *Jñānsamudram* in the name of the king was built and the image of Bhūmipirattiar was set up ⁷³ In the Siva temple the image of Tīrukkamakōttattu-Āludīa Nāchiar was consecrated At Sakkottai, the image of Tīruvīdi-nāchiar, probably the *utsava* image of Goddess was set up. ⁷⁴ These instances may incidentally corroborate the view that separate shrines for the Goddess in all our temples was only a later development Most of the ancient temples both Siva and Viṣṇu are called only after the presiding Lord Even the famous Minakṣī temple was known in *Tevaram* hymns and the inscriptions as Tīru-ālava-udaiyār temple

In the Siva temple at Ariyur in Lalgudi, the image of Subrahmanya was set up by one Nachchinārkkuniyān of Dīpangudi near Tīruvārur (in the reign of Jātāvarman Sundara) From a record from the Viṣṇu temple at Nāngunēri, we infer that Saṭagōpa i e, Nammālvār was already deified At Alvār-Tirunagarī also, the birth place of Nammālvār, the description refers to him as Tīrūkkurugūr-māmuni ⁷⁵ From the records of Srivilliputtūr temple, we come to know that Periālvār and his foster daughter Āndāl were deified and their hymns *Tīrupallāndu* and *Tīruppāvai* were recited Āndāl is referred to as Sūdikkodutta Nāchiār We get reference to the recitation of *Tīruvāymoḷi* also called as *Saṭagōpanpāttu* In fact a late Pandya record is completely composed of the words and phrases taken from *Tīruppāvai* ⁷⁶ The image of Emberumānar or Rāmānuja was set up at Srivaikundam temple during the time of Mar Kulasekhara (13th Cent) At Mannarkoil there was the *Nālāyiravan-tirumandapam* where *Tīruppāvai* was recited A *dasar* from Kerala set up the shrine for Kulasekhara Alvar in the same place. ⁷⁷

Recitation of some of the sacred works like *Tīruvempāvai*, *Tīruchālal*, *Tirunjñānam* are mentioned in the 12th century records. A record

72 288 of 1940-41

73 284

74 55-56 of 1946 47, Amman Shrine founded at Sivapuri (69 of 1228-29)

75 21 of 1927, K V Raman, *Ep Gleanings on Sri Vaishnava Achāryas*, Prof Sastry, Fel Vol 1971.

76 379 of 1959-60

77 397, 400 and 402 of 1916

from Siva temple, Nanguneri dated in the reign of Maravarman Sundara I mentions the recitation of *Tiruvempāvai* ⁷⁸ In the reign of Sundara II in Minakshi temple provision was made for recitation of *Tiruvempāvai* in *Sādānippaṇ* in Margali ⁷⁹ The identification of the work *Tiruchāṣaḥ* mentioned in a record of A.D. 1135 in a Siva temple is not known. ⁸⁰

Architecture and Art

The monuments of the Pallava kings had engaged the attention of the scholars for a long time and now a fairly reliable account of the architectural evolution of the Pallava monuments is available to us ⁸¹ But somehow the Pandyan monuments have not received adequate attention mainly because of the lack of dated inscriptions. For example, we have no record comparable to the famous Mandagapattu inscription of Mahendravarman clearly proclaiming the heralding of a new era of stone architecture in Tamil nadu. Till recently with the available data the earliest Pandyan cave temple could not be dated before A.D. 770 — the Narasimha cave temple at Anaimalai of Nedun chadyan Parāntaka I. But the discovery of the Sēdan's (A.D. 654-670) inscription dated in his 17th year at Malayadikkurichi pushed the date of rock architecture in Pandyanadu by nearly a century earlier. The date of the record is A.D. 671. But even this date is at least 40 years behind the pioneering work of Pallava Mahendravarman I. Nevertheless it is an important landmark in the history of Pandyas in more than one way. Sri K. R. Srinivasan who discovered the inscription in 1957 had discussed the importance of it in one of his recent papers ⁸² According to him this signifies the era of stone temples in Pandyanadu in the wake of the new Hindu renaissance movement that took place in Tamilnadu under the influence of the Alvars and Nayanmars. This is emphasised in the word *Kappirukkōyil* (கப்பிரக்கோயில்) that occurs in this record. We are already familiar with

8. ARE 1970 p. 26.

79. Ibid p. 60.

80. 1907 p. 6.

81. K. R. Srinivasan, *Cave Temples of Pandyan* (Madras 1958) 111-113. Sundara Rajan's papers on Rajalimba Temple.

82. I am thankful to K. R. Srinivasan who has permitted me to use his paper submitted to Pandyan Seminar Madurai 1971.

Mahendravarmar's claim that he was the first to make temple out of stone for the Hindu Trinity. So, the appearance of the word "Kāṭṭāṭṭēṭ" in Senan's record can be appreciated in this context. I would like to draw the attention of the scholar to another similar reference in the Avamala cave of Madurai Kavi or Māru Kāri (A.D. 770). It refers to the temple at *Adiṭṭaṭṭa* and *Keṭṭaṭṭa*, stone-house for Lord Viṣṇu. This temple movement went hand in hand with the Bhakti movement. The latter advocated the archa-form or image-worship and the temple movement gave concrete expression to this idea in masonry stone. In the Pandyan country, in the first phase of this stone architecture, we have a series of *Keṭṭaṭṭa* in the form of cave temples. To cite only a few examples:

Malayadiluruchi cave (A.D. 670-71)

Arumala cave (A.D. 770)

Tirupparamukundam cave (A.D. 773)

Avamala cave (A.D. 870)

the cave temples at Pillayarpathi,⁸³ Tirumayam, Tiruchendur, Kunraluthi, Tirumaleppuram, Jain cave temple at Sittannaval, the Subramanya cave temple at Kalucumalai, the Tirumandilarai cave in Kavaluram district etc.⁸⁴

In fact, the cut-in cave temples of the Pandyan country far outnumbered those of the Pallava territory. But in point of time and style, there seems to be at least one generation gap between the two. In A.D. 670, the Malayadiluruchi cave was still in simple mandapa type of Mahendravarmar style. By this time, Pallava Narasimhavarmar had gone a step further in producing those beautiful caves with hon-based pillars and the *lata* of miniature shrines on the *prastara*, as at Mahabalipuram. But the Pandyan cave temples have their own individuality in the arrangement of shrines and deities within their cave. The lower rock-cave at Tiruchirapallai and Tirupparamkunram cave are outstanding examples where we have a full array of sculptures of Viṣṇu and Śiva on either side face, and in the back wall the sculptures

83 I Mahadevan and R. Nagaswami would, on the basis of palaeography of Pillayarpathi inscription date the cave to 5th-6th centuries. *Contra* J I H XLV p. 48

84 H. Sarkar, *Manappadu cave, Damsilca I*

of Ganapati, Durga, Subrahmanya and sometimes Jyestha are portrayed

The next stage in the temple-evolution viz. the cut out temples or rathas, so very popular at Mahabalipuram was almost not gone through by the Pandyas. We have only one solitary example of a *ratha* viz. the Kalugumalai Vettuvān kōll. But the mode adopted is different from that of the Pallavas. Here, the full temple stands in the middle of a trench, cut out on all sides from the hill. This process of entrenching and cutting out the temple was not practised by the Pallavas but we have examples at Ellora.

Structural temples

Structural temples were fast becoming the order of the day in Tondaimandalam and also the Chola territory. The Pandyas did not go through the ordeal of cutting out rathas. A number of beautiful structural temples came up quickly and the Pandyas took the title on its crest. There are references in the conversion of brick temples into stone ones. From 9th century onwards a series of medium sized stone temples were built both by the Pandyas and the Muttarayans. Some of outstanding examples are Vatapattasāyi temple, Srivilliputtur, Vnragunlsvara temple, Radhapuram, Siva temple at Ambasamudram, Tiruttalsvara temple, Tirupattur, the Vijayanāśryan temple, Nanguneri, Tiruvālsavaram temple, Eriechavudaiyar and Tirumulanatha swami temples at Ambasamudram, Lakshminarayana temple, Sinnamanur, Tirunārayana vinnagar temple at Attur etc. Some of the earliest temples have undergone renovation in later times. But some are intact. The Alagarkoil sung by Periālvār Andal and Nammahar has evidently been renovated later. Its sanctum has a peculiar elliptical shape.

The apsidal temples so popular in Tondaimandalam in the Pallava and Chola days was almost non-existent in Pandyanadu. This would show that it was essentially an influence from Andhra and Deccan which did not influence the Pandyan country. On the other hand they practised and experimented with the other peculiar type of vimanas popularly called the *aṣṭāṅga vimāna*, akin to the Vaikunta perumal temple at Kanchi and the Uttaramerur temple. We have two good temples in Pandya nadu — one the Saumyanarayana temple at

Tirukoshtivur and another the Kūdal-alagar temple at Madurai. The latter seems to have been renovated in the Nayak days.

The early structural temples were of modest size but possess good finish and restrained beauty. It has been pointed out by K. V. Soundara Rajan that in extracting granite blocks and building temples out of them, the Pandyas were ahead of the Pallavas who were only working with soft rock, sandstone. All early structural temples of the Pallavas were in sandstone whereas the Pandyas showed their mettle on a tough rock. This tradition, they carried on further in subsequent times.

Later Phase.

During the Chola ascendancy in the Pandyan territory, a number of temples were built which act as links between the first and the second phase of the Pandyan rules. The kings of the Second Pandyan Empire gave importance to the outer *gopuras*, the *prākāras* and the mandapas. With them, a new epoch of constructing huge temple complexes on a grand scale started. The existing ancient temples underwent amplification and expansion. Outstanding examples: Minakshi Amman temple, Madurai, Nellaiappar temple, Tirunelveli, the temple at Tenkasi etc. The eastern tower of Sundaresvara shrine was built by Avanivēnda-Rāman and the Melagopuram by Jatavarman Parakrama-Pandya (14th century). Mar Kulasekhara I constructed the long corridor (*Tiruchchurrur-maligai*) around the main shrine at Tirunelveli.

With the tremendous expansion of Pandyan hegemony spreading over the whole of Tamilnadu, Pandyan architectural activities crossed the traditional boundaries and over-flowed into the Chola mandalam and Tondaimandalam. Thus, came up the Pandyan *gopuras* at Jambukesvaram, Srirangam, Chidambaram and Tiruvannamalai.

We can also say that the practice of preparing tall multi-faceted pillars having life-size sculptures was also a Pandyan contribution, which the Vijayanagar and the Nayaka artisans adopted and developed. Such an example is found at Nellaiappar temple, Tirunelveli and also at Tenkasi and Alagarkoil.

Beautiful examples of early Pandyan sculpture can be seen at the Tirupparanukunram cave with Vishnu, Durga, Jyeshtha, Ganesa and the

beautiful Nataraja or Narasimha panels and also at Subrahmanya cave at Anaimalai and the Vishnu temple at Tiruttangal. The Vettuvan Koil Sculptures are masterpieces of Pandyan art. They are bold and majestic and at the same time possess natural beauty.

Bronzes

Not much attention has been paid to the bronzes of the Pandyan country. But quite a few marvellous pieces like those of Sri Rama group at Kūdal Alagarikoll Madurai are of great beauty. Similarly are the deities at Tirumohur Alvar Tirunagari Srivankuntam etc. Much work is called for in this field.

Paintings

The Jain paintings at Sittaanavasal may more justifiably be called Pandyan and were probably done during the time of Srīmaran Sri Vallabha (9th century), when some renovations were done to the cave by Ilam Gautaman the Jain teacher.

The caves at Tirumalaipuram and Tirunandikkarai in Kanyakumari district retain some Pandyan paintings. All the Jain sculptures of mediaeval times like those of Anaimalai, Alagar malai Kilavalavu etc. were once fully painted. Now some traces of green and red colour are alone visible. Recently similar paintings were noticed on the Jain image at Arutapattu. A systematic search aided by colour photography of the existing vestiges of paintings would be useful.

Conclusion

Thus, the contributions of the Pandyas constitute an important chapter in the annals of South Indian art and architecture. Not only in the quantity of output but also in the intrinsic qualities of beauty and magnificence the Pandyan monuments stand out as great landmarks recalling to our minds the long and arduous vicissitudes through which the art tradition and art impulses of the Tamils passed from age to age and reached the acme of glory during the middle of the 13th century A.D. In the realm of sculptural art and paintings too they have left behind a rich legacy which formed the base and source of inspiration for the Vijayanagar and Nayak artists.

APPENDIX

1 *Brahmi Inscription Mentioning Nedunchalian, Māngulam, Madurai Dist*

கணிய் நந்த அஸிரிய் இகுவன்கெ தம்மம்
இதத நெடுஞ்சழியன பணஅன் கடலஅன்
வழுத்திய கொட்டுபித்த பாளிய்

Kaṇi — y — nanta āsiriya — ik — uv — aṇ kē dhamman
itta — a netūñcaḷiyan paṇa — an Kaṭalan
valutti — y Kottūpitta — a — pāḷi — iy

Translation

Dedication (dhammam) to Kaṇi — y nanta, to the monk (asuriyika), (living) yonder (uvan)

This monastery (pāḷi — iy) was caused to be given (by) Katalan
Valutti — y (an) officer (or servant) (under) Neduncaḷiyan¹

2 *Arittapathi Inscription (Madurai District)*

நெலவேலிய சழிவன அதனன
வெளியன முழகை கொடுவன

Translation

Chaḷiyan Atanan Velian of Nelveli gave (or offered) the Cave ²

1 I Mahadevan, *Corpus of Tamil Inscriptions* (1968)

2 K V Raman and Y Subbarayalu, *A New Tamil Brahmi Inscription*, J I H XLIX (1971) The reading has been revised here in the light of a closer examination of the record recently

3 *Pandya Chendan's 50th year inscription at Madurai¹*

பாண்டிய குலமணி பாதிப்பனாப் பராதும்பு வஞ்செ
யது விகரமங்கனாலகாசடக்கி மறங்

கெடுத்தறம் பெருக்கி அக்ரஹாரம் பல

செய்த பரிமிதமாவிய ஹிரண்யகீர்ப் கோ

ஸஹஸா துலாபீரத்து மஹாதீர நங்கனாற

கலி கடிநது மங்கலபுரந நகரமாகவி வீ

றறிகுநது செங்கோ[ன]டாவி வினற கோச்சே

நதன மறறைமபதாவது ராஜ்ய ஸம்வத்ஸா

ஸ செவலா விறக வவகை சொன மதரு ப

ருத்தரி கேஸவியானெனப் பிபபிடடு கா ருேடு

வித்து காளுத்தத ஓடை அடைதது

ழ்காடு பருத்திக்குடி] ———

—————

4 *Perañciyar's hymn on Alagar koil*

மனவச்மதுக வமத்துனவமாச்ச்கொரு தேரின் மேவ

முள்வங்கு பின்று மோழையெழுவிததவன மலி

கோன்னவில கூச்சேற்கோன அருமாறன் தெனச டற்கோன்

தெனனன கோண்டாடுத் தெவறிகுமாலிருளது சேரலயே

¹ K. C. Kumbura, *Madurai's Sacred Sites*, Vol. 1, pp. 28-30, VIII.





PLATE II Lower Rockent Cave with 50 ft. deep Tunnel 13



PLATE III A portion of the cut-out temple, Kazhugumalai, Tirunelveli District

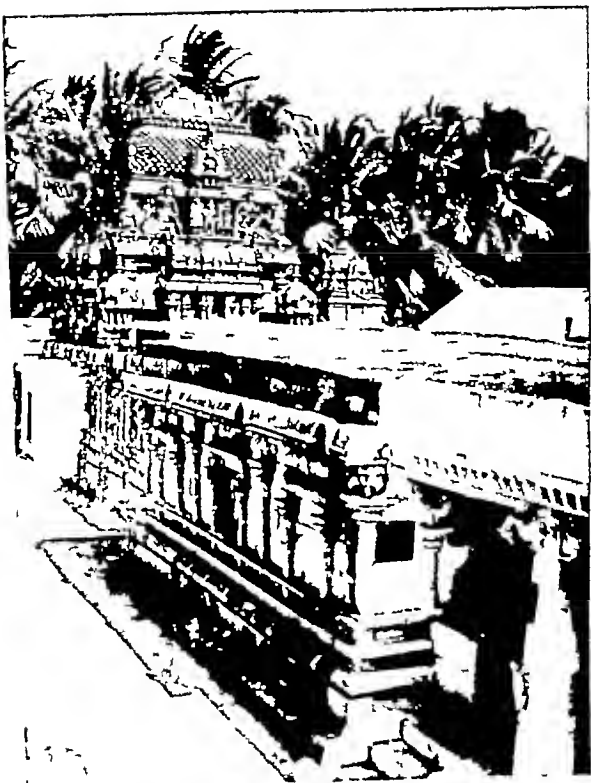


PLATE IV. SOUTHERN PRAMANGALIA (D. 100)



PLATE V Pandyan sculptures, Tirupparankunram, Madurai District



PLATE VI-A Pandyan Palatine. Sittannaval, Tiruchirappalli District.



PLATE VI-B Pandyan Palatine. Sittannaval.

